

## Arafat marries aide, Arab diplomats say

PARIS (R) — Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat has married 28-year-old Suha Tawil, one of his advisers on economic affairs, Arab diplomatic sources said on Tuesday. Ms. Tawil's mother, Raymondah Tawil, a Palestinian author and activist, told Reuters: "I cannot deny it, but it is Chairman Arafat's right to declare it officially. I believe there will be a communique from the Palestine Liberation Organisation headquarters in Tunis about this in a day or two." Mr. Arafat, who heads the PLO, was not available for comment in Tunis. The Arab sources said Mr. Arafat, 62, married Ms. Tawil in Tunis last month. He is a Sunni Muslim while the Tawils are Greek Orthodox Christians. "Chairman Arafat is the spiritual leader of all Palestinians and this would be an important gesture indicating the unity of Palestinian Muslims and Christians," Raymondah Tawil said. Mr. Arafat has not been married before. He often replied he was "married to the revolution" when asked why he had not wed. Suha Tawil worked directly with Mr. Arafat in Tunis for two years after studying at Catholic high schools in the Israeli-occupied West Bank.

# Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation  
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية للرأي

## Positive results at NAM meeting — Abu Jaber

AMMAN (Petra) — Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber returned to Amman Wednesday after attending the meeting in Larnaca, Cyprus of the foreign ministers of the Non-Aligned Movement. The outcome of the meetings was positive and covered the future role of the Non-Aligned Movement, Dr. Abu Jaber said in an arrival statement. Discussion centered among other things on the chairmanship of the Non-Aligned Movement until September of 1992, due to difficulties facing Yugoslavia, the current chairman, Dr. Abu Jaber noted. He said agreement was reached that Indonesia should serve as co-chairman during this period. In the absence of the Soviet Union and the emergence of a new world order, the role of the Non-Aligned Movement assumes greater importance, Dr. Abu Jaber said. He said the Non-Aligned Movement will from now on represent a forum where the Third World nations can present their cases. The foreign minister said that he had met with the foreign ministers of Egypt, Syria and Tunisia for in-depth discussions about the current situation in the Middle East, the ongoing peace process at the bilateral and multilateral levels. But he noted further meetings were needed among the Arab parties.

Volume 17 Number 4924

AMMAN THURSDAY-FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6-7, 1992, SHAABAN 2-3, 1412

Price: Jordan 100 fils; Saudi Arabia 1.50 riyals; UAE 1.50 dirhams

## Jordan expects more returnees from Kuwait

By Rama Sabbagh  
Reuters

AMMAN — Kuwait's tight new residency laws will force all but a fraction of the remaining 7,000 Jordanians, mostly of Palestinian origin, to leave the emirate soon, a Jordanian official said on Wednesday.

They will join 300,000 who left either when the Gulf crisis started or at the end of the Gulf war, when Kuwait cracked down on Palestinians suspected of collaborating with Iraq's occupation army.

Kuwait, seeking to make its

600,000 nationals a majority in their own country, has set a February 15 deadline for all non-Kuwaitis to begin processing their residence permits.

"Of course, Kuwait is telling every country and party that is pressing them to keep the remaining Jordanians and Palestinians that they are not forcing them to leave," one senior Jordanian official said.

"But with the tight residence regulations they are enforcing and the criteria they are setting, they will only keep a nominal

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## Blizzard 'freezes' Jordan; 215 injured New storm hits today

By a Jordan Times staff reporter

AMMAN — The blizzard that hit Jordan in the last 48 hours, disrupting communications and other basic services, is to be followed yet by another storm expected to arrive by Thursday evening, the Department of Meteorology said Wednesday.

A low depression over the Mediterranean will affect the country by all Thursday night and Friday morning with more rain and hail but with snow only on very high mountains, the department said.

It warned of frost formation and poor visibility in almost all areas if the Kingdom.

The blizzard caused 414 road accidents and various incidents with 215 persons sustaining in-

juries, according to the Civil Defence Department (CDD), whose teams were alerted for emergency cases.

CDD personnel were called out in 190 cases to rescue people cut off by the snow or to deal with flooded homes and pull out cars stranded on highways. Two people died in fires in the Karak region in southern Jordan and numerous people with heart or kidney conditions were carried by CDD ambulances to hospital, the statement said.

The CDD asked the public to call the following telephone numbers in real emergency: 193, 198 and 199.

The blizzard has forced the closure of schools, universities and public and private institutions and caused the disruption of tele-

phone lines and electricity supplies in many areas.

The Queen Alia international airport, which was temporarily closed early in the storm is now functioning normally. But the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) director Ahmad Jweiber announced a rescheduling of flights in view of the weather conditions. The main reason for the delay in some flights was the closure of parts of the main highway leading to the airport.

Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Ali Abul Ragheb told the Jordan News Agency, Petra that power failures were restricted to some areas in the Balqa region, Amman and Madaba district but repair teams were

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Snow blanketed most of Jordan Wednesday as the eastern Mediterranean region suffered from snowstorms accompanied by gale winds, rain and hail (photo by Youssef Al 'Alian)

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Spain to return 69 Iraqi refugees to Jordan

MADRID, Spain (AP) — Spanish immigration authorities decided Wednesday to return 69 Iraqi refugees to Jordan because they did not qualify for political asylum. The refugees were part of a planeload of 84 Iraqi men, women and children held at Madrid's airport since they arrived last weekend from Amman. They were to leave Madrid later Wednesday. Spanish authorities agreed to let in nine of the Iraqis who appear to have grounds for political refugee status, an interior ministry spokesman said. "The cases of those nine will be studied further. The others are economic hardship cases," said the spokesman, who is not identified in keeping with custom.

### Czechoslovak tanks need permit to leave Danish port

COPENHAGEN (R) — A ship carrying 12 Czechoslovak-made tanks believed bound for Syria has docked at a Danish port but must apply for an export permit before it can resume its voyage, a justice ministry official said on Wednesday. "Under our rules on weapons exports, the owner must apply for an export permit because the ship is in a Danish port, even if it is in transit," said the official, Joergen Poulsen. He said the foreign ministry was looking into the matter. Police have orders not to allow the ship to leave the small port of Soeby, where it docked on Monday after running aground the previous day, until it has the necessary papers, Denmark's Ritzan news agency said.

### Editor-in-chief of opposition newspaper dies

CAIRO, Egypt (AP) — The body of Philip Galab, editor-in-chief of a leftist opposition newspaper, was found Wednesday in his apartment, apparently dead from natural causes, said an official of the political party that owns the newspaper. When the punctual Mr. Galab, 60, failed to arrive at the Al Ahali newspaper at his normal time, colleagues went to his home and forced open the door, said the official. The newspaper belongs to the Marxist National Unionist Progressive Party. "His body was found in the apartment," said the official, who refused to let his name be reported. "There was no sign of anything unusual. It's believed that he died of natural causes." Mr. Galab's career in journalism began in 1955. He worked with the government-owned Al Akhbar newspaper and also wrote for Rose Al Youssef, a leftist weekly magazine. (Mr. Galab used to contribute a weekly column to the Arabic daily Al Ra'i). He is survived by his wife and a son, who were out of town when he died.

### 4 shot dead in gun attack in Belfast

BELFAST (R) — At least four men were killed and several injured when a gunman burst into a Belfast bookmakers' shop on Wednesday and opened fire indiscriminately, police said. The shop was in a predominantly Catholic neighborhood and detectives feared it could be a revenge attack by Protestant extremists for the IRA killing of eight Protestant construction workers with a bomb last month. An eyewitness said "a gunman burst into the shop and sprayed it with machinegun fire."

### 2 Arabs, an Egyptian accused of spying

CAIRO (AP) — Security police arrested an Israeli Arab, his daughter and an Egyptian on suspicion of spying for the Jewish state but later released the Egyptian, authorities said Wednesday. Speaking anonymously under government guidelines, officials identified the Israelis as Fares Sabti Mirati, 41, and his daughter, Faika. The Egyptian was identified as Ali Hassan Attiyeh, a social researcher. After interrogation, a security prosecutor ordered the Israelis transferred to Torah prison south of Cairo and released the Egyptian for lack of evidence, the sources said.

### 'Israeli and Syria in secret contacts'

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel's Davar newspaper said on Tuesday that Syria and Israel were engaged in secret contacts to cut a land-for-peace deal. An Israeli spokesman called the report "totally baseless." Quoting unnamed U.S. sources, Davar said Israeli and Syrian intelligence agents were at work on a peace accord based initially on Israel's partial withdrawal from the Golan Heights. The sources said bilateral talks launched in Madrid last October were a mere smokescreen for the secret contacts, Davar reported. They added there would be no progress in the next round expected later this month, probably in Washington.

### 54% of Israelis favour land for peace

TEL AVIV (AP) — The majority of Israelis support trading land for peace to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict, provided Israel's security is guaranteed, according to a poll released Tuesday. The poll by the Dahaf Institute in Tel Aviv indicated that 54 per cent of Israelis would return most of the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip to Arab rule following an interim period of autonomy. The finding is consistent with poll results in recent years, which generally show more than half of Israelis favouring a land-for-peace formula. In the latest survey, 42 per cent of the 1,100 Israelis polled advocate Israeli annexation of the occupied lands. The remainder had no opinion.

### Kuwait, Britain to sign defence pact next week

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait and Britain will sign a wide-ranging defence pact during a visit to London by the emirate's defence minister next week, Kuwaiti officials said on Wednesday. Defence Minister Sheikh Ali Sabah Al Salem Al Sabah would travel to London on Saturday and the signing ceremony would take place on Tuesday, the officials added.

## Crown Prince: Bush's re-election good for peace

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan has expressed the view that the re-election of U.S. President George Bush for another term in office is bound to offer good opportunities for making progress in the ongoing Middle East peace negotiations.

In an interview with the Frankfurt Allgemeine newspaper, the Crown Prince said there was no question about Jordan's credibility in the peace negotiations, and that every effort should be exerted, especially at the most critical stage, during the coming American presidential elections.

Should Israel persist in its present position with regard to its settlement programme in the occupied territories, even if it does not get U.S. financial aid, to its refusal to exchange land for

peace and to denying the Palestinians from the diaspora and east Jerusalem the right of taking part in the peace negotiations, then the two sides will have reached a zero-sum game, the Crown Prince noted.

That point has not been reached yet, the Crown Prince told the leading German newspaper. But should that be the case, the Crown Prince added, then Jordan would have to think about the issue of continuing the talks.

Any progress at the political level in the peace negotiations, he said, should be coupled with an agreement on economic aid to the region.

Prince Hassan said there should be fairness in the treatment of Jewish and Palestinian immigrants, noting that the

Israelis continue to receive and spend \$50,000 for the settlement of every Jewish immigrant, while the Palestinians are receiving very little in contrast.

In the interview, the Crown Prince demanded that Jordan be helped to settle its foreign debts, now estimated at \$8.2 billion, noting that Jordan sustained crippling losses in the Gulf war and the subsequent economic sanctions amounting to \$10 billion.

The question of Jordan's economic hardships and losses sustained because of the Gulf crisis, he said, should come up at the peace negotiations which should also take into account equitable distribution of natural wealth, water and oil so that the region can avoid further conflicts in the

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## 8 dead, 50 injured as police, FIS battle

## Conflict escalates in Algeria

ALGIERS, Algeria (Agencies)

Eight people were killed and 50 wounded outside a courthouse as security forces battled angry crowds in a bloody clash of a three-week crackdown on Muslim fundamentalists, the state radio said Wednesday.

The clash in Batna was one of several in eastern Algeria on Tuesday outside courthouses where Islamic Salvation Front leaders were on trial for allegedly violating new laws banning political activity at mosques.

The radio said security forces seized a large quantity of explosives hidden in a mosque in Batna.

More gunfire was heard Wednesday in Batna, where most businesses were closed and security forces sealed off the city centre. There were no immediate

reports of new casualties.

According to a police communique, violence flared Tuesday after a Muslim cleric was sentenced to two months in prison for disturbing public order with provocative statements.

Riot police units called in army reinforcements to ward off repeated attacks by fundamentalist supporters, many throwing stones and others firing shots from balconies of surrounding buildings, police said.

Some attackers tried to set fire to armoured vehicles, the communique said.

At least one policeman was wounded by a gunshot, the communique said. It did not give a breakdown of other casualties.

The security forces initially used tear gas, but this was ineffective, and warnings shot were

fired, police said.

New laws bar political activity at Algeria's 10,000 mosques and ban crowds from gathering outside to hear political speeches in the form of prayers.

The Salvation Front, whose imminent electoral victory was blocked last month, appealed to its supporters to join a "peaceful national march" in Algiers on after weekly prayers on Friday. It said marchers would demand restoration of cancelled elections and release of jailed fundamentalist leaders.

Regulations imposed last November require advance approval of mass marches. The Salvation Front announcement did not say whether approval had been sought or received.

On Tuesday, the front called

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## U.N. retains sanctions against Iraq

UNITED NATIONS (Agencies)

The Security Council on Wednesday retained economic sanctions against Iraq after completing its periodic review of the trade embargo imposed shortly after Baghdad's troops invaded Kuwait in August, 1990, diplomats said.

Iraq has violated the Gulf war ceasefire agreement by refusing to allow the United Nations to ensure that it neither builds nor buys new weapons of mass destruction, a U.N. official says.

In addition, President Saddam Hussein's government called off talks that were to begin Wednesday in Vienna to arrange the sale of Iraqi oil to buy food and medicine and pay reparations, another U.N. spokesman said Tuesday.

Stung by a U.N. trade embargo, Iraq has experienced food shortages and soaring prices. In a message to the United Nations, Iraq said it will not accept the monitoring of future arms-building or purchasing, said Rolf Ekeus, chairman of the U.N. special commission that is in charge of dismantling Iraqi weapons.

Mr. Ekeus said in a telephone interview that the U.N. Security Council could take up the matter as early as Wednesday, when it was scheduled to review sanctions imposed on Baghdad following the country's August 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

Although sometimes creating

(Continued on page 2)

## Palestinian dies in Shin Bet custody

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Police will investigate the death of a Palestinian who died in the custody of Israel's Shin Bet secret service after complaining to a judge he was being tortured, officials said Wednesday.

Mustafa Akawi, 36, died on Monday night or Tuesday in a Shin Bet lockup in the occupied West bank town of Hebron. Relatives said he was in good health before his arrest on Jan. 22.

An autopsy has not yet been performed, but the family has received permission to have a physician of its choice present, said Ehud Gol, a spokesman for Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir.

The Shin Bet is directly responsible to Mr. Shamir and does not have an official spokesman. Mr. Akawi's death renewed debate over the methods of the Shin Bet, which interrogates Palestinian detainees. It also runs

a network of Arab informers to keep tabs on the Palestinians in the occupied lands and to prevent guerrilla attacks against Israelis.

Leading Israeli liberals called for an independent investigation. Israeli and international human rights groups have alleged

Israeli and international human rights groups have alleged Palestinian detainees are routinely tortured. Methods include severe beatings, hooding prisoners, shackling them in painful positions and depriving them of sleep for days.

Israeli officials have denied the allegations, saying cases of mistreatment are rare and always investigated.

Since the December 1987 start of the Palestinian uprising, five Palestinians died as a result of torture during interrogation and two committed suicide in breaks between interrogation

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## Bilaterals resume in Washington Feb. 24

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — U.S. Secretary of State James Baker has asked Israeli and Palestinian leaders to resume peace talks on Feb. 24 in Washington, leaders in both camps said Wednesday.

The date initially mentioned was Feb. 10, but Mr. Baker wanted the talks postponed until after he returns from trips abroad so he can be present for what is expected to be a tough session, an Israeli government official said.

"He (Baker) wants to be there for the peace talks," the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Israeli newspapers said Mr. Baker planned to take an active role this time, offering compromise proposals to keep the talks on track.

A possible deadlock could develop between the Israelis and the Palestinians over Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. The Palestinians have said they would

ask for a freeze in settlement construction as a precondition for continuing negotiations. Israel has said it would not stop construction.

Ghassan Khatib, a member of the Palestinian delegation, confirmed that the Americans have proposed a Feb. 24 meeting date. He said the Palestinians preferred an earlier date, but have not made a final response.

Ehud Gol, a spokesman for Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, said: "The date is still under discussion. It's clear that it won't be on the 10th."

Mr. Gol said Israel has agreed to hold another round in Washington, despite its earlier insistence that the talks must be moved to the Middle East as quickly as possible.

Bilateral talks between Israel, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and the Palestinians began at the October peace conference in Madrid.

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## Peres says he would compromise on Golan

TEL AVIV (R) — Opposition Labour Party leader Shimon Peres, gearing up for a June election, said on Wednesday he would compromise with Syria on Israeli control of the Golan Heights.

"I would be open to a territorial compromise with Syria on the Golan Heights," Mr. Peres told Reuters.

Mr. Peres threw his first political punch of the election campaign on Tuesday when he said he would support a freeze on building new Jewish settlements in the occupied territories.

He appeared to be staking out a conciliatory position on peace talks with Arab states and Palestinians in contrast to the rival Likud party of Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir.

Syria's central demand in the talks has been an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights

— strategic hills captured in the 1967 Middle East war.

Labour also hopes to make political gain from unemployment which has risen to over 10 per cent, a 20-year-high, during Mr. Shamir's term.

"The problems are economic but most of the solutions are political," Mr. Peres said.

He said he believed the upcoming campaign would be fought over economic issues. Opinion polls show Likud has a slight edge over Labour ahead of the June 23 vote.

Mr. Shamir is having trouble getting \$10 billion in U.S. loan guarantees to fund absorption of 400,000 Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union since late 1989.

His hardline government's drive to expand settlements in the

(Continued on page 2)

جوردان تايمز







## Naji Al Ali — an honest film about a courageous man

By Sana Attiyeh

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Handala, the cartoon character of the assassinated Palestinian cartoonist Naji Al Ali, is a poor Palestinian who has his back turned to the reader and looking at what is happening around him.

When Israel invaded and occupied the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Mr. Ali was working in a Kuwaiti newspaper in the Gulf state. He felt frustrated and could not produce the cartoons that described the situation as he saw it. Then he had a dream: He saw himself at the age of ten when Jews attacked his Palestinian village of Shajara in 1948. The young Ali was tending the sheep at the time and he turned around, his arms behind his back watching what was happening. Then he heard his mother call him.

Mr. Ali woke up and Handala was born. The artist took out his paint brush and created Handala in his poor clothing, bare feet, bands behind his back, watching, never saying a word.

Mr. Ali's creation of Handala was portrayed in one of the beautiful scenes of the film, Naji Al Ali, which opened in Amman two weeks ago.

When asked by his chief editor why Handala's back was turned, Mr. Ali said: "Because he is looking back at Palestine." Until Mr. Ali's murder in London in August 1987, Handala's back was still turned watching the Palestinian cause being abused — either by Arab states or the Palestinian leadership.

Played by the leading Egyptian film star, Nour El Sherif, Naji Al Ali is not just a movie about the cartoonist, but about the issues related to the Palestinian plight since

1948 and its gradual deterioration in the nation's quest for liberating Palestine.

A courageous and honest film about a courageous and honest man is how viewers described Naji Al Ali. It was Mr. Ali's truthfulness and freedom that made many in important political positions hate the cartoonist. It was his honesty in portraying the reality of what was becoming of the Palestinian cause, through Handala's eyes, that eventually ended his life with a bullet in the head.

Watching Naji Al Ali brings tears to the eyes of many in the audience, not because the film is dramatic, but because it makes one take an honest look at the realities involved in the plight of the Palestinian people.

There are scenes performed, directed and photographed so realistically, it makes the viewers react with

anger, frustration, helplessness and regret.

When young Naji's simple village is attacked by the Jews and the people panic as they escape the horror of what is depicted as Western gangs shooting at the villagers and their homes, a little girl drops her doll and the people's running feet flatten it. The little girl, who is carried by a parent, starts to cry because she lost her doll ... forever.

### FILM REVIEW

The exodus scene of the Palestinian people fleeing their homeland is truly a hair-raiser. A silhouette of a long line of men, women, children and animals carrying what the people could manage to take of their belongings are seen walking in the far horizon, leaving their country they had never imagined would be taken away from them permanently. They walk to southern Lebanon and set up a camp which they name Ain Al Hilweh.

The small sensitive scenes continue throughout the film, directed by Atef El Tayeb. A woman screams as she gives birth to a baby in a tent, a man lies on the muddy ground under the rain with his lute (musical instrument) by his side and the men sit around the fire discussing what is happening in Palestine.

The film — filled with flashbacks — takes the viewers from the time Mr. Ali was shot and lying in a foreign hospital bed, to his childhood, adolescence and struggling adulthood.

Mr. Ali's friend, Salim (played by Lebanese Ahmad Al Zain), a Palestinian fighter based in Lebanon, is depressed about the shooting of his friend, takes his bottle to the beach and remembers how the two went to Beirut for the first time at the age of 18 to study. They set up a tent on top of someone's house. Mr. Naji says "there's no home except in Palestine." Salim remembers this and cries out that Palestine is now so far

away.

There are also some caricature scenes in Naji Al Ali. One of them is when he lived in Kuwait, a friend tries to comfort him at an extravagant party and tries to convince him to start a business to make some money. Mr. Ali refuses and walks away through a crowd of young people having a good time swimming, drinking, dancing.

When Handala was created out of his dream, Mr. Ali lets loose, drawing cartoons criticizing everything and everything he believes is ruining the chances of ever liberating Palestine.

### Naji Ali in Beirut

When Mr. Ali returns to Beirut to work at Al Safir newspaper, his friend Su'ad (played by Syrian actress Laila Jaber) convinces him to attend a party at a Palestinian leader's residence. "It will give you ideas for cartoons," she tells him.

A somewhat exaggerated scene of another extravagant party at a fat Palestinian leader's fancy penthouse depicts an overindulgent Palestinian society claiming to be struggling for the liberation of Palestine. Outside on the terrace, people dressed in expensive cloths pluck fresh oranges from the trees planted on the roof. Feeling disillusioned and sickened by the sight, Mr. Ali opens the zipper of his jeans and urinates on the orange grove as tears roll down his face.

Much of the film focuses on the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in the summer of 1982 with all the misery that came with it. The scenes in the shelter seem real, with children crying, men listening to the radio and being cynical about what is happening and women waiting for the Israeli air raids to end.

Mr. Ali goes out to find medicine for a pregnant woman and he comes across one of the most powerful characters in the film: An Egyptian outcast (played by Egyptian actor Mahmoud Al Jundi) who remains drunk and continues to hope, and almost believes, that the Arab armies were coming to help the Lebanese and Palestinians fight the war.

After getting bombarded by the American-made Israeli warplanes, the people of the town walk out holding white handkerchiefs above their heads in surrender. A powerful scene that has the

audience in tears at how many times the Arabs have lost and surrendered since 1948.

The Egyptian outcast, with the bottle still in his hand, teases the Israeli soldiers and sings and dances until he is shot to death.

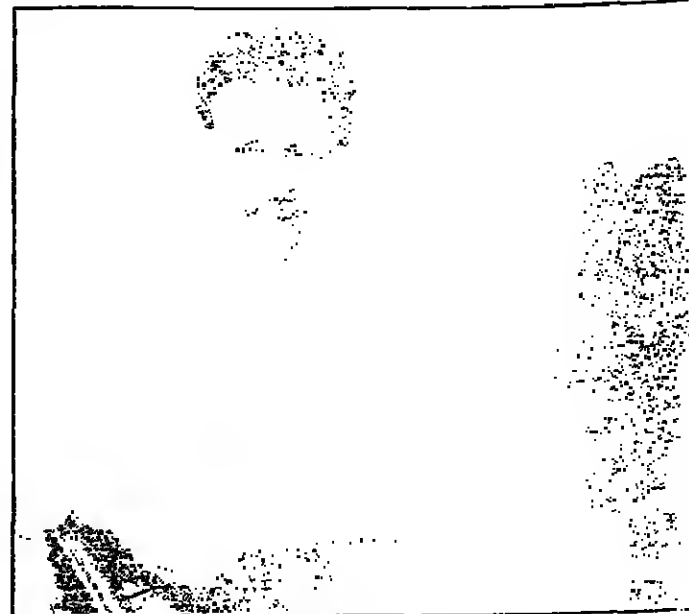
"Where will Handala go now?" Mr. Ali asks after the Palestinians are forced to leave Beirut.

He takes his wife and children and goes back to Kuwait. And there, he is pressed by his editors and Palestinian leaders not to continue drawing what they believe to be "provocative" cartoons. He does not listen and continues to work freely criticizing the Arab regimes.

Many are unpublished. He decides to work from London, although he is warned by friends that he would not be safe there. "Where in this world will I be safe?" he asks.

It is not just the story of the Palestinian people through Naji Al Ali that has a strong effect on the local audiences. The fact that the production is of high quality — a rarity in Arabic movies — also gives credibility to the film.

The movie being shot in Lebanon with tanks, armies and Palestinian refugees makes the film seem real. Naji Al Ali was one of the most expensive Arabic films



Director Atef El Tayeb

produced, although 3,000 people, including Syrian and Lebanese soldiers, volunteered to take part in the movie.

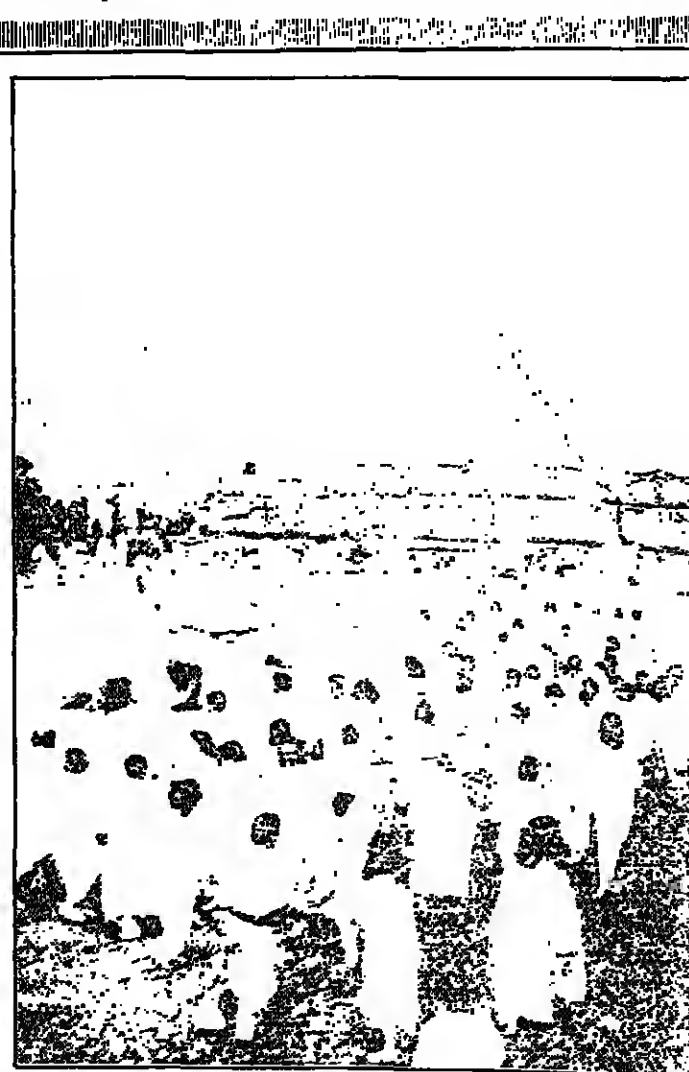
Nour El Sherif, also a producer of Naji Al Ali, said last week in Amman that the least the filmmakers could do was to feed the 3,000, costs \$1 for a couple of sandwiches and water for each person, so that's about \$3,000 a day for food," he said.

El Sherif also explained that the lack of infrastructure in Lebanon forced them to spend more on the production. "We had to buy a generator for the lights."

For those who made Naji Al Ali, the aim was to relay a message to the Arab masses that cries for freedom from the oppression of the Arab regimes have divided the Arab nation and has pushed the liberation of Palestine further away.

As Jundi (who plays the short role of the Egyptian outcast) wrote about the making of Naji Al Ali: "I support the position of the film Naji Al Ali and call for confronting oppression and demand freedom ... I and my (artist) colleagues in the Arab World can achieve our goals with determination, and before us is the live example: Naji Al Ali, the great Palestinian artist."

Thousands of New Age followers gather at Cairo's pyramids try to channel positive energy to the rest of the world



Thousands of New Age followers gather at Cairo's pyramids try to channel positive energy to the rest of the world

doubt that the region will benefit from their search for peace. "Everything that has been going on in Europe, this tremendous push towards freedom that culminated in the breaking down of the Berlin Wall, is the consequence of an unleashing of positive energies and influences. The fact that the cosmic energy has been concentrated at the foot of this Egyptian pyramid can have only a positive effect," Claudia notes in

hushed tones. A leader signals and all movement stops. It is two minutes past noon. The spiritualists fall silent and raise their arms to face the sun. The Muslim call to prayer: sounds in the distance from the thousands of minarets in the city of Cairo. For a moment the thousand-year-old religion and the spirit of the New Age are joined, fused by meditation and prayer — World News Link.

## Dawning of a new age

By Katia Sabet

CAIRO — On Jan. 11, hundreds of men, women and children converged on the Pyramids of Giza. The old Egyptian camel driver has seen many strange things in his life, but he could not believe his eyes. "They have been here praying since dawn," he said with wonder. "There are people here from all over the world!" Dressed in white and wearing a crown of stars, the people walked towards the tomb of Menkaure, the smallest of Egypt's three most famous pyramids. Starting at dawn, the strange procession flowed to the

pyramid, with people praying for a "doorway" to open and for the "cosmic energy" to descend and illuminate mankind.

The meeting is the culmination of years of work by people who believe that mankind and the Earth are on the threshold of a new era and that on Jan. 11, humanity has the opportunity to move into "a new spiral of consciousness." About 450 people came to Giza. The participants believe they are the "starborne," that they have come from beyond this planet, and their mission on Earth is to promote spiritual awakening and to move our world onto an "entirely new

evolutionary template." Along with a crown of stars, many have crystals around their necks. Crystals were also placed on the ground. They joined in a vast human chain around the temple under the hot sun and at the appointed time, 11:11 a.m., began to rotate clockwise. Instructions for the ritual were broadcast softly by a loudspeaker in English, French, Spanish and German.

"Today is the beginning of the final phase which will take us into the Age of Aquarius in 2011," explains Vipke, a young German woman. "Calculations and revelations have told us that today a 'doorway' will open and energy will come down and centre on this precise point. We have prepared ourselves through meditation to use and channel this positive energy into the world."

These "spiritualists," as they like to call themselves, prepared for this moment for years through a series of events — the "World Peace Meditation" in 1986, a "Harmonic Convergence" in 1987, "Earth Link" in 1988 and "Earth Day" in 1990. Jan. 11 is what they see as the beginning of the final phase, to last for the next 20 years. The Earth will then transit into a new sign for a period of 2,600 years. "We are now in the last decade of the Age of Pisces and are about to enter the Age of Aquarius," adds Vipke. "Pisces is the symbol of narrow-mindedness, fanaticism and sectarianism. With

the coming of the Age of Aquarius, people will become more understanding, more generous."

In the desert of Giza, around a temple built 4,500 years ago to honour a dead pharaoh, the visitors want to make sure that the "doorway" opens. Some sit on the large stones and ruins that surround the compound, others have climbed a few steps on the pyramid and sit in meditation, their palms upward. The cold desert wind blusters and lifts the sand, but the area around the temple seems to be covered by a giant, invisible bell. The air is warm and still.

Two men and a woman lead the spiral of people. Suddenly, a woman appears, her arms crossed over her chest. She stands at the edge of the ruins and announces in a clear, ringing voice: "I want to walk." She descends and joins the procession.

"Today is the beginning of a new cosmic era," confides a young woman named Claudia who cannot afford the temple access fee. She sold her car to pay for the trip so that she could be here under the Egyptian sun at this moment.

"Today the doorway is opening. We must work to develop ourselves spiritually. That way we will be able to solve the external problems that surround and obstruct us. This energy can help us. We must not resist it. Only then will we be able to stop thinking with our intellect. We will act according to our feelings. Our knowledge will

come from the heart. Western society's problems stem from the fact that it thinks only with the mind, but during the Age of Aquarius, we will be able to think with our heart."

"In 11 minutes it will be exactly 11:11 a.m.," says a voice over the loudspeaker. "This is the moment we have been waiting for." The participants join hands. The sun disappears behind a small cloud and reappears almost instantly. The boundless silence of the desert, a silence filled with the wind and the soft murmur of the sand, is impressive. The chanting starts again. A young man with blond, curly hair plays an organ; another chimes a Tibetan bell.

"They will walk like this for the next 36 hours," explains Vipke. "They will take turns in groups and continue until tomorrow at 2 p.m." The spiritualists are dressed in white, she adds, because it is important to live and work in the light. Light purifies the body and the soul. "We have to learn to drench ourselves in light... There will be no more differences between the religions and the world will live in harmony."

Claudia says softly, "Our planet is dotted with energy currents, or 'vortexes.' These are wheels of energy that centre on certain points of the globe. Each geographical point corresponds to an energy centre on the body — a 'chakra.' The body is said to have seven main chakras going from the centre of the

pelvis to the crown of the head... With Sinai and Jerusalem, the pyramids form an energy centre, which, on the body, corresponds to the throat chakra. We are here to capture this energy and channel it toward other parts of the globe."

Considered most important among the earth's energy centres are Mount Kailas in Tibet, Lake Titicaca in Peru, Stonehenge in Great Britain, Mount Olga in Australia and Mount Shasta in the United States. "At this time," adds Claudia, "other groups of spiritualists are performing the same movements in other places around the world." The U.S.-based organisers of the event had calculated that at least 144,000 people were needed to gather physically or spiritually around the world for the "doorway" to open. They say it has been achieved.

The pyramids of Egypt have long been considered by spiritualists as a key place — the pyramid shape is the choice esoteric form. Says Thierry, a French participant: "The wealth of symbols in a pyramid is daunting. The four triangles of the sides, the square of the base, the point which attracts cosmic energy, the body of the Pyramid itself which is a shield and a protection, the four sides that represent God, man, method and achievement... in short, the whole of human science is embodied in the pyramid. The point is to know how to interpret its language."

The spiritualists have no

### THOUGHTS FOR THIS WEEK

History is, indeed, little more than the register of the crimes, follies and misfortunes of mankind — Edward Gibbon, English historian (1737-1794).

To fear love is to fear life, and those who fear life are already three parts dead — Bertrand Russell, British philosopher (1872-1970).

We have 40 million reasons for failure, but not a single excuse — Rudyard Kipling, English writer (1865-1936).

The cruellest lies often are told in silence — Robert Louis Stevenson, Scottish writer (1850-1894).



## U.S. higher education — dire straits for the decade?

By Barbara Novovitch  
Reuters

NEW YORK — Yale University, President George Bush's alma mater, is \$8 million in the red this year and plans faculty cuts of more than 10 per cent over the next decade to avoid a \$50 million deficit.

And Yale, which boasts Ivy League cachet and deep-pocketed alumni, is doing well comparatively speaking. The recession is savaging the pride of the U.S. system of education — its colleges and universities, which depend on tuition charges, state revenue, endowments and government grants to pay professors, buy books and maintain buildings.

"We're in for some tough times," predicts American Council on Education President Robert Atwell, who expects the educational deficits to drag on even if the economy turns up.

At the University of Bridgeport, a \$22 million deficit brought on by shrinking enrollment was so daunting school authorities decided selling the university was the only solution. But when a group affiliated with the con-

troversial Rev. Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church offered \$50 million, students and trustees raised cries of alarm and a merger with a nearby university is now in the works.

Demographics fuel the crisis. The number of college students aged 18-22 will be down until the late 90s and declining enrollment is expected to deplete revenues. To combat shrinking budgets, tuition has increased to a national peak of more than \$25,000 a year for some private schools. But high tuition hurts enrollment, hitting particularly hard at minorities.

And the huge increase in private school fees has tens of thousands of students trying to get into cheaper state schools, creating a drain on state budgets.

In most states, tax dollars are mandated by law for prisons, Medicaid and elementary schools but expenditures for state-funded universities are generally discretionary.

With costs going up in all of those areas, explained Robert Sweeney of the American Association of State Colleges and Universi-

ties, "there's no discretion left."

"If you live by tax dollars, you also die by them," said L. Jay Oliva, president of New York University. "The recession and enrollment problems at the same time — fewer people coming into the college system — is a double whammy."

Last year state colleges and universities in 30 states had their budget cut, leading to colleges being shuttered, professors sacked and classes curtailed.

This year, 19 states have slashed allocations for colleges and universities — some such as Maine by as much as 10 per cent — and nine others expect to wield the knife.

Even the best-known private institutions are feeling the pinch. Harvard has announced the elimination of some 346 staff.

Through early retirement, part of the university's "continuing attempts to control costs," said spokesman Peter Costa.

"But there have been no layoffs," he said.

Yale, the nation's third oldest university, said its planned reductions, which

the faculty is loudly protesting, are necessary to maintain salary levels and pay for \$1 billion in long-deferred maintenance of ageing buildings.

In California, despite a near-doubling of tuition in the last three years to \$3,036, an expected budget shortfall of \$315 million forced the state to reduce the university's 140,000-member workforce by 1,700, defer academic pay rises, curtail maintenance and tighten eligibility requirements.

"This current budget, which was enacted a year ago, is the worst for the university in terms of state funding since the late 1960s," said University of California (UC) spokesman Rick Malaspina. "We actually had a one per cent decrease in funding."

The University of Illinois started the year with \$8 million less because of across-the-board cuts in all state budgets. And another \$16.5 million give-back is likely.

At the University of Maryland, seven programmes — from urban studies to applied design — were eliminated and the College of Human Ecology was closed.

## Jails without walls — a new way to reform murderers

By Krishnan Guruswamy  
The Associated Press

JAIPUR, India — Ramesh Chandra Joshi, tailor and convicted murderer, lives with his wife and children. He comes and goes as he pleases.

Mr. Joshi sews pyjamas and nightgowns for a Japanese buyer. He and 46 other convicted killers, all serving life sentences, are inmates at one of India's 26 open jails.

Their cluster of mud and tin houses in a suburb of this tourist city 298 kilometres (185 miles) southwest of New Delhi is identified by a rusty sign as the Sampurnanand Camp for Prisoners Production Centre.

The men are allowed to travel freely and mingle with other residents of the suburb. "They are convicts only on paper," said A.N. Mullah, a retired judge who studied the concept for the state government and recommended more open prisons.

"It's meaningless to put a murderer in a regular jail," Mr. Mullah said. "He is cut off from society. A person who could have become a

useful citizen is condemned for life."

Prisoners apply to review boards for admission to open prisons. Board members consider the type of crime, the person's background and behaviour and whether he has marketable skills.

Only one prisoner has escaped, 15 years ago, and has not been found.

Mr. Jaipur has two open prisons, with a total of 150 "inmates."

They work in garment factories or on farms, run roadside snack bars or sell the city's renowned cotton prints. One man is an unarmed security guard at an agricultural university.

Most open prisons have only one resident official, whose permission is required for an overnight absence.

"Murderers are in great demand; they make fine workers," said R.K. Bajjal, director of prisons for Rajasthan State. He said murderers are more dedicated to their work, take more pride in it and do not strike.

Of the 1,300 convicted murderers in Rajasthan

State, 150 are in open jails. On national figures on the jails are available because all Indian prisons are run by the states.

Mr. Joshi, 35, stabbed a man to death in a gambling club 10 years ago.

"I think about it sometimes, but I am not sorry about it," he said. "That man deserved to die. He was a cheat."

After seven years in a conventional prison, Mr. Joshi was sent to his jail without walls, established in the 1950s.

Although he can ride his bicycle in Jaipur to pick up supplies, meet business contacts or to watch a movie, he still feels shackled.

"A prison is still a prison," he said, taking a break from pedalling his sewing machine. "I can go anywhere, but I know I'm a prisoner and must be back for the evening roll call."

"My wife is still angry with me. She says, 'You destroyed the whole family.'"

Anil, Mr. Joshi's son, said schoolmates taunt him sometimes and "I complain to the teachers. They usually say

something harsh and the troublemakers feel ashamed."

Lifers are eligible for parole after 14 years, which means Mr. Joshi has four more years to wait.

One advantage of an open jail is clear: There are few fights because no one wants to risk being returned to a cell.

Prison Director Bajjal and four other senior officers review applicants for Rajasthan's open jails. To qualify, prisoners must have families or close relatives willing to live with them.

"We stress family ties because it is a great motivation for good behaviour," Mr. Bajjal said.

Inmates say living with their families eliminates one reason for escaping.

"Where can I go? Mr. Joshi said. "The police will catch me one day or the other. Also, I have lots of relatives in this place."

Open jails also help prisoners learn new skills or continue their education. Mr. Bajjal said some have earned master's degrees, usually through correspondence courses.

## Tiny Texas jail pleases prisoners, confounds sheriff

By Mike Clancy  
Reuters

RAYMONDVILLE, Texas — Getting sentenced to jail in this small south Texas town is not such a bad deal — not when prisoners can help themselves to marijuana in the evidence room or simply kick a hole in the roof and escape.

"I guess we have had the happiest prisoners around," Sheriff Larry Spence told Reuters. "It has been a big headache for us."

At least a dozen prisoners have escaped since August, most simply by kicking holes through the jailhouse roof in this town about 70 kilometres north of the Mexican border.

Others discovered that by lying on their backs on top bunks and pressing their feet against the ceiling, they could raise the ceiling and crawl into a space below the roof.

"From there they went all through the building, broke into the evidence room and helped themselves," Sheriff Spence said.

It was several days before deputies, puzzled by the dreamy, grinning attitudes of the prisoners, discovered the inmates were high on stolen marijuana.

County Judge Eustolio Gonzales, former Mayor of Raymondville, which has a population of 9,400, said, "I saw guys actually smile when sentenced to jail. They figured it wasn't such a bad deal when they could get free drugs or leave whenever they wanted."

So many prisoners have escaped since Sheriff Spence nor Judge Gonzales know the exact number.

"I know it has been too many," said Judge Gonzales. Sheriff Spence added, "I got so that when the telephone would ring at my house at night instead of answering it 'hello' I would pick it up and say 'how many this time?'"

Many of the problems apparently stem from a lack of money to build a strong enough jail. City officials said plans originally called for a

96-bed jail with several strict security features, including steel ceiling panels.

"But we ran way short of money and instead of real strong steel we had to settle for lightweight bars, which a lot of these guys we bring in can just bend," Sheriff Spence said.

Judge Gonzales said prisoners "can bend the bars with their bare hands and can kick right through the thin bricks."

When a new jail annex opened in late 1990 "the problems started right away," Sheriff Spence said.

"The first we knew was when five prisoners escaped together one night," he said.

Sheriff Spence, 45, is running for reelection in March. He has been sheriff or deputy sheriff for 15 years.

"Everybody is pointing fingers of blame and most of the fingers are pointing at me," Sheriff Spence said.

He said some of the escapes could be blamed on jailer error, but most should probably be attributed to poor construction.

He said all but one of the escapees have been recaptured. "Most of them are local and we know where they hang out," he said. "Sooner or later we catch up to them."

But some of those recaptured have escaped again.

"We try to keep the troublemakers under close watch, but we have not always succeeded," Sheriff Spence said with a sigh.

Residents of Raymondville fear they will become victims of the escapees and are pushing for improvements.

But Sheriff Spence said there is little money to spare.

"Some of the deputies have volunteered to help and we have welded up the vents and some easy places to escape from, but so far only two cells are really secure," he said. There are 24 cells in the jail.

He pointed out that the last escape occurred in late October, but added, "the weather has not been too good so maybe nobody wanted to leave."

## Cherry

By E. Yaghi

(Names have not been changed to protect the guilty)

Vi and Huey Vanek, both 67, waited many painful childless years for someone like Cherry to come into their lives and now nothing is too good for their pride and joy. One evening, Huey sat on a deep green sofa in front of a red brick fireplace while logs blazed and whiffs of black smoke curled up towards the chimney. "You know Mom," Huey said to his wife, "our lives have never been the same since we adopted Cherry. Imagine, we lived so many years in complete boredom and worthlessness!"

Vi sat next to him cradling Cherry on her lap and stroking her long soft marmelade hair while Cherry yawned a little, shut one eye and looked haughty and proud out the other. "I don't know how we could have wasted our lives, Dad. I never dreamed our days would be so fulfilling and rewarding." Vi said, as she bent her face down to kiss her precious. "Before we got Cherry, we were just two bored rich Floridians without a purpose, weren't we Cherry?"

Cherry purred and closed her eye. Pure ecstasy this existence. She had a mom and dad and everything else a ten year old could ever want and more. "Ah, what luck," she thought. "I've got a mink coat decorated with shiny gold sequins and I play in my miniature Rolls Royce convertible and have my own personal stationery with my photo on it. I fly first class, sleep in the Ritz-Carlton and drink only bottled water. Who could ask for more?"

Huey got up to put another log on the fire. It popped and orange sparks jetted out, landed near the iron grill and died. The glow from the fire seemed to spread over his face and he exclaimed, "Mom, we've got to plan Cherry's birthday party. There's only a week left!"

Vi pressed her finger against her lips and whispered, "Please not so loud, she might hear us, for as you know, her sense of sound is quite sharp. I'll put her in her bed and then we can make all the necessary arrangements. Oh, it'll be so much fun! Her tenth birthday, I'm so excited I can hardly wait. Let's have a cake made in her image and give out chocolates in the shape of kitten. We'll make Cherry's birthday a day she'll never forget!"

So Mom put her daughter to bed and while Cherry slept in plush quilted comfort between satin sheets, dreaming of katnip and driving her toy Rolls Royce, her adopted parents planned the lavish party. "Now let's see," Mom said as she chewed on the eraser of her pencil, "so far our guest list numbers 70 and I've figured our expenses to come to about \$5,000. Ten is a big number so throwing this year's party at the country club is perfect! You always have such great ideas Dad, Cherry will be so pleased!"

"She sure will, partner," Huey answered, "Nothing's too excessive for our little girl!"

The week passed quickly, finally the night of the party arrived. Cherry's reddish-orange hair was shampooed and blow-dried by her own personal groomer. After her hair-do, he snapped her gold necklace around her slender neck and grabbed a mirror to let her see how she looked. "There now Madame, what do you think?"

She smiled a shy, coy quiet smile and winked at herself in the mirror. "Such beauty," she told herself, "but enough of this self-admiration."

She knew she would be the life of the party and the envy of all. Her hair looked lovelier than ever, it had such body, such silky sheen. After all, she used only the best shampoo

and conditioner and only her hairdresser knew if her hair was artificially coloured or not. She pounced down from her dressing chair onto the thick posh carpet and ran to show off to her mom and dad.

"Cherry! Let me check your nails, have they been properly manicured?" Mama Vi asked as she swept little Cherry up into her arms. She inspected her daughter's nails and said: "Um hummm That's perfect. How beautiful you look! Dad, have you got Cherry's valise ready? Don't forget your video camera so you can film the whole party."

"Sure enough, Mama. Come on little girl, jump right into your \$600 carriage. Nothing's too good for our baby and by the way, happy birthday! Mom, put on her mink coat and let's go have a bash!"

"Come on, there's no time to waste," thought Cherry, but she didn't argue with her generous parents, instead she gave them another one of her coy smiles and contentedly held still while mama dressed her in her mink cover.

Later, as the party roared on and many rolls of film were shot, and birthday songs sung and the pink birthday cake in Cherry's image divided and eaten, she heard her mom say irritably, "Huey, some people call us excessive! They say we're wasting our money and instead of spoiling our Cherry so much, we should give some to charity!"

"Well, what did you tell them, Mom?"

"Humph! I said it's our own choice what we want to spend our money on. We give Cherry the very best. Why not? We like the best!"

"Don't listen to a word they say. This is our enjoyment," Dad said, offering encouragement. "People like to criticise us because it gives them something to do. We're not ashamed how we spend our money!"

Cherry felt bad that there were actually folks in the world who didn't like her, but she was comforted by her parents words and pricked her ears to hear more as she lay cuddled in Vi's arms. "As for those people who tell us that we should give our money to charity, why don't they give their money to charity? Besides, I feel what we're doing is a wonderful thing," declared Vi.

"Of course it is. Look at all the beauty contests we entered her in and how many prizes she's won. Why, remember how some judges have actually cried when they saw her!"

"You're right, Huey," Vi asserted. "Cherry's brought so much love into our lives. She's going to stay with us until we die. And if we die before our 'baby' does, our house, along with a paid companion, will all go to Cherry!"

"Yeah," Huey snorted. "Who deserves our wealth more than Cherry? Let's keep our philosophy like the sign hanging in our hallway that reads: 'If our Cherry isn't important to you, then feel free to leave!'"

"I just wish those snobs who disagree with how we raise our baby hadn't been invited and eaten Cherry's delicious pink cherry cake!" Mama grunted.

"Meow!" agreed Cherry. How lucky she was to have such wonderful parents and so much love! She purred when she remembered her roomful of shiny trophies, plaques and silky blue ribbons and how she had been named the best cat in North America! Purr-fection! If only she could eat a tasty grey meaty mouse instead of a pink cherry cake, but oh well.

Not possible you say? Well, truth is often stranger than fiction and this story's very true! Ask Cherry or better yet, since she's not the best conversationist, ask her "Mom" and "Dad."

## In Nohant with George Sand, the 'lioness of berry'

By Pierre Albert Lambert

PARIS — In Nohant, in the heart of the Berry region, where the "girl from the woods" spent her childhood and finally died, the house was known as the "Château." In fact, it was a big Louis XVI style mansion "having no more pomp than a village dwelling," wrote Aurore Dupin, the Marshal of Sax's granddaughter who later became Baroness Dudevant and was to be remembered by posterity as the writer George Sand.

It may just have been a village house, but it was comfortable and prettily furnished. It has been listed as a historical monument and the décor and atmosphere maintained by the erstwhile mistress last century, has been recreated. Often, it was full of friends. Chopin, one of her most famous lovers, composed there. Delacroix had a studio there. Balzac, Turgenev, Théophile Gautier, Dumas the younger and Franz Liszt were habitual guests. Flaubert, whom the hostess called "my old troubadour," spent the last week of 1869 there.

One can see the bedroom of the Dudevant couple and the Polish-style bed in which little Solange, their second child, was born. The older child, Maurice, built that wonderful puppet theatre. The characters, dressed by his mother, are lined up by the dozen in display cabinets. The tiny writing bureau on which George Sand wrote, sometimes all night long, is

still there in a corner.

On the ground floor, one can linger in the boudoir where she plucked at the harp and strummed the guitar by the fireside as well as playing billiards with a pipe in her mouth. In the day, the writer used to go horse-riding and hunting with the less nobility, across the Berry countryside. In that puritanical province, the fiery "lioness of Berry" created a scandal by dressing like a man, smoking cigars and collecting lovers.

The scandal was further aggravated when the 1848 revolution broke out and the author of *Indiana* took the side of the people. In the *Bulletin de la République*, she wrote articles in favour of democracy and demanded the emancipation of women. She even went so far as to incite the workers to riot. A little later, she wrote the following declaration of faith, which appears astonishing for the period: "I am a communist in the same way that one used to be a Christian in the year 50. For me, it is the ideal of a developing society."

But the years passed and the scandalous châteline calmed down. She arranged the garden behind her house to suit her taste. "I must admit that literature does not give half as much pleasure as the spade," she wrote to a friend.

She is depicted riding her donkey across that mysterious Berry region, full of legends, which served as a setting for her works. In Berry, she fulfilled her love for nature and trees.



George Sand painted by Auguste Charpentier

ry, she fulfilled her love for nature and trees. This love for nature came very early. After one of her bouts of depression which, from time to time, brought her to the edge of despair, she wrote in a notebook, "I had become like that poor madman who sought tenderness. I requested it of the woods, the plants, the sun, the animals and I know not what invisible being who only existed in my dreams."

In Nohant, when she was on the way to being 50 and right to the end of her life, the former romantic odalisque, who had never been able to live without loving, devoted herself with complete liberality to the poor. She gave them most of her royalties. In her generosity, she worked at full speed, publishing one novel after another. *La Mare au Diable* was written in four days.

She did not hesitate to beg for what she called "God's

gold," in the upper spheres, for her protégés. She even appealed to the Empress Eugénie herself. Jean Chalon describes her as being the "social security of the Berry." It was the time when Théophile Gautier wrote: "It is impossible to be a better woman and a better man in the same time."

When George Sand died on June 8, 1876, at the age of 72, from an obstruction of the bowels, the peasants of the hamlet, who had forgotten her former escapades and extravagance, carried the body of the "good lady of Nohant" to the cemetery. Victor Hugo wrote the elegy: "I cry for a dead person and I hail an immortal being."

Indeed, George Sand remains well and truly alive for the thousands of visitors who come to Nohant in summer, from all over the world, to seek her memory — *L'Actualité En France*.



## The golden age of cinemas

By Claire Thierry

As the mother-country of the Seventh Art, France built a lot of cinemas, but now, unfortunately, the numbers are dwindling. Some of them, with their sugar-candy constructions or modernistic architecture, have been preserved, even if, sometimes, only the facade has been kept.

PARIS — Cinema-lovers sighed with relief. The Pagode has been saved. This famous cinema in the 7th District of Paris, narrowly escaped conversation thanks to an express procedure of "official listing", adopted in September 1990 by the minister of culture.

Had it not been for this decision, an astonishing orientalistic building from last century would have disappeared. It was part of an old Japanese house. It had been dismantled in the Empire of the Rising Sun and brought to Paris in pieces to be re-erected for the director of the Bon Marche big store, who wanted to give his wife an original pavilion for entertaining. In keeping with the exotic tastes of the period. It was enhanced with a picturesque lacquered roof and a pebble and bamboo garden and opened in 1896. Much later, in 1931, it became a cinema. Since then, the finest French and foreign films have

been shown there.

But for one cinema which has been saved, how many others have been destroyed in nearly a century? Since the time when, one day in December 1895, the Indian room at the Grand Cafe, near the Opera, inaugurated the fascinating history of cinema auditoriums, with the first public projection of the cinematograph. How many of these auditoriums with their magic names (Eden, Eldorado, Splendid, Vox, etc.) have closed down? How many of these "cinemas Paradiso", whose closed, obscure and fantastic world was visited by wide-eyed kids and future film-directors, have now gone?

With speculation in real estate, particularly in the business quarters of the French capital, many have been replaced by stores, offices and fashionable restaurants or fast-food outlets, or even turned into pretentious multi-auditorium com-

plexes with their tasteless, scentless decor, only sometimes leaving the facade, protected by regulations, such as the pharaonic architecture of the Louxor, or the cubist setting of the little Studio Raspail.

### The Golden Age Of Cinema

Among the big auditoriums built in the thirties, one sumptuous one has survived, the Rex in Paris. It was built in Boulevard Poissonniere in 1932 and it is a symbol of cinema as a show with its 3,300 seats and its breathtaking interior. The over-ornate decor which, at the time, was described as "atmospheric", conjures up the feeling of a Moorish village which has been improved upon by the Art Deco. If some of the facilities (the cabaret and the artists' dressing-rooms) have made way for further projection areas, the main auditorium, which has been restored, is still operating, with its arch of light and its joyous fountains, lit up at the end of every year.

It is just like in the golden age of cinema when the crowds flocked to these "theatres for the poor", whose imitation gold shimmered in the electric lighting. It was a golden age which, in addition to the monumental temples built by the powerful firms of Gaumont and Pathe to show their productions,

saw a host of small local cinemas opening. These had a typical atmosphere with their painted posters, glassed-in ticket-office for the cashier, mirrors and a profusion of neon-lights in the entrance and folding velvet-upholstered seats in the auditorium.

Many of these have disappeared too. A few of them have survived competition from television which eats up spectators and the unfurling wave of supermarkets which have replaced them owing to their unprofitable activity. These auditoriums (MacMahon, L'Entrepot, and the Action cinemas in the provinces) are frequented by enlightened cinema-lovers, who come to see marvels from the past or recent works reputed to be difficult for the general public. Hence their reputation as "art" cinemas.

In the northern suburbs of Paris, the Beaumont-Palace (named after the town in which it stands), with its red constructivist-style facade, is listed in the Inventory of Historical Monuments and has been saved twice. First of all by television which has, for several years, used it as a setting for its "cinema evening" programme called "La Dernière Seance". And, secondly, by the town-council which, in November 1990, bought and renovated the cinema which is historic since, as a former music-hall,



Rex theatre is one of the oldest and the most prestigious cinemas in Paris.

it received a hudding performance called Charles Aznavour.

Many auditoriums have difficulties surviving owing to a fall in the number of cinema-goers and a rise in running costs. Their total number fell from 5,026 in 1987 (including 443 in Paris) to 4,658 in 1989 (383 in Paris).

So the state, via the Ministry of Culture, helped by local authorities and associa-

tions, is coming to their aid in various ways, particularly in towns where cinemas provide local entertainment, for instance by exemption from certain taxes, financing for renewing technical equipment or for improving the comfort of the spectators, paying the cost of film copies and aid for local authorities which take charge of a cinema. The result of this move is that 120 screens were saved between mid-1989 and the end of 1990 — L'Actualite En France.

## New Nat Cole record series brings back his musical legacy

By Ken Franckling  
Reuter

NEW YORK — Nat "King" Cole is king again.

The late pianist and singer's legacy has been strengthened more in recent months than at any other time since 1965 when lung cancer claimed his life.

First came the chart-topping tribute to the singer by daughter Natalie Cole, in which she recorded his old hits and electronically mixed her voice with his in a spectacular version of his classic song, "unforgettable."

But now comes the most unforgettable Nat "King" Cole package of them all, an 18-compact disc or 27-record package that shows that long before commercial radio discovered his velvety voice, Nat "King" Cole was one of the finest and most innovative pianists in jazz history.

The collection of 349 recordings from Mosaic Records, a mail-order re-issue specialist, includes everything Cole recorded between 1943 and 1949, plus songs recorded later in his unique trio style combining piano, guitar and bass after his career shifted into the popular music idiom.

"One of the things I've always said about my father's music is that it never is a hard sell. You don't have to tap your foot if you don't want to or snap your fingers," his daughter said in an interview. "You just let the music take care of you."

Many of Cole's early hits are included in this compilation, including Straighten Up And Fly Right, nature boy and The Christmas Song. There are also scores of pure instrumental tunes celebrating Cole's boogie-woogie skills and the intricate guitar/piano harmonic shadings he and Oscar Moore made famous.

Throughout the 1940s, Cole had a profound influence both on pianists and vocalists.

He assembled his first piano-guitar-bass trio in 1937.

That "cocktail combo"

musical format soon was emulated by other top pianists including Art Tatum, Oscar Peterson, Lennie Tristano and Ahmad Jamal.

A teenager when her father died, Natalie Cole shared a musical closeness propelling her desire to record her father's songs recently. She says her recording was made out of love, and not, as some listeners have implied, to further her career.

The son of a Baptist minister, Cole grew up in Chicago where the city's jazz and blues culture became a force in his musical life.

As a pianist, he made music filled with intimacy, humour, freshness and freedom of expression. It is characterised by flowing lines, subtle voicings and inventive harmonies.

Yet, Cole's success as an instrumentalist was eclipsed in the 1950s by his roles as a singer and television personality.

Mosaic's mammoth box set, "The Complete Capitol Recordings Of The Nat King Cole Trio," brings his comprehensive talents back into the spotlight.

The box comes with 64 pages of extensive liner notes and analysis of his work.

"He was an extraordinary talent, like few others, because in addition to his obvious gifts, he had that rarity — exquisite taste — both pianistically and vocally," says jazz pianist Dick Katz of Cole in the liner notes.

Most of the material in the collection, gathered by Mosaic producer Michael Cuscuna, came from the vaults of Capitol Records, for whom Cole recorded exclusively from Nov. 30, 1943, until his death.

All the recordings from Cole's first seven years with Capitol are included in the collection. After 1949, material with Cole's trio was tapped, along with larger combinations that incorporate the "trio sound" and jazz feel.

"The Complete Capitol Recordings of the Nat King Cole Trio" is available only from Mosaic Records in Stamford, Connecticut.

## China's opera makes room for budding foreign diva

By Janet Snyder  
Reuter

PEKING — The xenophobic empress dowager, an avid fan of traditional Chinese opera, might not have been amused.

But British actress Ione Meyer is struggling to overcome any reservations to-day's opera aficionados might have about a foreigner attempting this devilishly difficult art.

The 26-year-old Londoner is a woman warrior — both in the heroic roles she takes on and in her gritty spirit.

On a recent evening, she stepped on stage to portray legendary amazon Hu San-niang, stunning a bevy of old-time Peking Opera greats in the audience with her soprano and deft acrobatic manoeuvres.

Then disaster struck — her ornate feathered headdress toppled to the floor in mid-air. No one rushed to assist her, so with great aplomb she picked up the helmet and resumed her performance.

She brought the house down. Before arriving 18 months ago, Meyer studied mime in Paris. Her strategy is to incorporate her Chinese training and her Western experience to create new theatre.

Her teachers at the Peking Opera School look to Meyer to inject some much-needed vigour into an art form whose popularity is waning.

"Foreign artists like her bring their own experience to Peking Opera and at the same time enrich their experience for having been here," deputy headmaster Wu Jiang said.

"Peking Opera is now at a low ebb but you could say that it may be the beginning of its recovery," Mr. Wu said. "History has shown that Peking Opera reaches its peak when different cultures are mixed with it."

"I probably wouldn't be here if things were healthy. The school wouldn't have seen the need to open up," Meyer said.

Peking Opera combines a unique high-pitched singing with highly stylised acrobatic dance. Actors learn a complicated vocabulary of movements that symbolise, for example, riding to battle.

The school, established in 1951, has had difficulty recruiting students in recent years. "Some years we don't have enough kids to make a class," Mr. Wu said.

Peking Opera attained its

modern heyday in the 1950s when the last great female impersonator, Mei Lanfang, reigned supreme.

In 1966 radicals led by Jiang Qing, the late Chairman Mao Tse-tung's wife and self-appointed Czarina of culture who committed suicide last year, gutted the repertoire of classical plays.

She replaced them with eight revolutionary operas that glorified proletarian heroes.

Mr. Wu said his art suffered permanent damage. "That's why so many young Chinese know so little about it. It seems strange to them and they're just alienated," he said.

Those who do devote themselves might find a diploma from the school is no guarantee of a job. In the early 1960s there were nearly

30 troupes, but the number has dwindled to 10.

"It's a problem for students getting a job after they graduate, so often they have to stay on in the school," Mr. Wu said.

It is no place for dilettantes. Living conditions are spartan and students must study for seven years.

Meyer is in her second year at China's only classical theatre school to accept foreign students. She is the first foreign woman to undertake woman warrior roles in Peking Opera. She has two overseas classmates, a fellow Briton and a Japanese, both men.

The foreigners pay \$2,600 a year for tuition, room and board. Each has a private dormitory room, with just a thin mattress on an iron bedstead, a desk and a chair.

## Maria Tourou — from spacecraft to gouaches

By Katia Sabet

NICOSIA — As a young girl, Maria Tourou used to spend hours lying on the grass near her home in Famagusta, staring up at the sky and watching the clouds endlessly changing shape up above her. The house in Famagusta is long gone. Ms. Tourou's family were Greek Cypriots, and their home town came under Turkish control in the invasion of 1974. But the cloud-watching of Ms.

Tourou's childhood lives on in her paintings. "That's how I work — by solving out a mess," said Ms. Tourou. "The colours arrange themselves on the canvas, just like the clouds in the sky. And bit by bit the subject takes shape. I never know what I'm going to paint. If I knew, I would be dreadfully bored." Boredom is something Ms. Tourou knows little about. Throughout her life, she has always sought out new places and new experiences. Once,

she even became a guinea pig for the U.S. space programme. "I was in Texas, near Houston (home of the U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration NASA), when a friend asked me if I'd like to work with scientists from the space base," she recalls. "As I'm always game for any new adventure I said 'why not?'" Ms. Tourou's experience at the NASA base involved a physical training programme which brought her body to a

peak of fitness. Then came a battery of gruelling tests, some of them in simulated spacecraft. The results were used in the design of special suits to help astronauts cope with the effects of gravity and weightlessness. "I'm very happy to have had the experience," said Ms. Tourou, using a matter-of-fact tone to describe adventures that to her seem as normal as they would to anyone else. "It enabled me to receive a level of physical training that is unique in this world and to discover that I have a heart that is in perfect condition and an organism that is unusually resistant."

The fifth daughter of a wealthy merchant, Ms. Tourou did not take long to discover her taste for exploring. While still at school, she says, she learned that her two great interests were painting and travelling. At the age of 16, she left Cyprus to learn more about both. She enrolled at one of Britain's best-known art schools, the Hammersmith School of Art in London. After six years of study, she headed for Positano, in southern Italy, before again changing course, this time for the U.S., and specifically the Corcoran School of Art in Washington D.C.

The year was 1978, and since then, there have been many other trips, some of them planned, some that have happened by chance.

Along the way, she has known both "gipsies and kings," she says. "I'm a nomad. I like living 'elsewhere'. I don't travel as a tourist, but I go to discover places. When I find somewhere I like, I settle in there. I paint, I experiment, I think, I live."

Maria Tourou's permanent base is a small house converted from a sheppen up in the Cypriot hills, half an hour's drive from the capital of Nicosia. Here, she has installed an easel, a table and two chairs "in case someone comes to see me". She spends most of her time painting.

Many of her travels and experiences abroad are there in her work, though it may not always be easy to spot them. For Ms. Tourou has a horror of paintings that depict only external reality. And she especially loathes portraits. "I've done three portraits in my life and I didn't enjoy them," she said. "I prefer to talk to a person, to get to know him and then, once back home again, if I feel like it, to put down on canvas the impressions that his personality made on me."

Often, Ms. Tourou will be working on a dozen different paintings at any given time. She hardly ever makes a sketch before starting on a canvas. Her paintings, in oils and gouaches, are born rather than constructed. The

images that form under her paintbrush seem to have a life of their own, like flowers opening up in the sunlight.

Some of the figures in her paintings are reminiscent of Chagall, richly colourful and ectoplasmic rather than instantly recognisable as humans. "My characters have evolved in time as though they were alive," she said. "They have been children, then adolescents and now they are adults. But they are not men or women. They are asexual, simply people. They take shape on the canvas as I paint."

Ms. Tourou is prolific in her output, and has exhibited widely though, like many artists, she complains of being dissatisfied with much of what she produces. In a career that has spanned more than 25 years she has had at least 20 personal shows and about 30 group exhibitions, throughout Europe and in the U.S. Two of her paintings have been bought by the National Museum of Nicosia.

She has never been part of a group or a school. Ms. Tourou's style has always been her own, the product of her unusual heritage of travels and experiences. A recent exhibition in Nicosia bore witness to that fact — the multi-coloured gaiety of a Mexican "Fiesta" in "Algeria", the shimmering lights of "Erotic Vibrations", the heavenly shades of a trans-



Maria Tourou's life is a series of experiments and adventures. Art is the only constant.

cidental meditation in "Mental Journey" and the angry, violent tints of red which depict some dark unspoken terror in "Polypus Lupus."

In another painting, "Words Of Fire", two figures confront each other, flames spewing from their mouths like two half-crazed fire-eaters. The hatred between them is almost tangible. The

inspiration, says Ms. Tourou, dates back to the time she went to stay with friends, on one of her many trips away from home. "I was visiting friends who were constantly rowing with each other," she said. "I don't like it when people disagree and have arguments. I'm a person who prizes peace. The painting was born like that — World News Link.



When starting a new painting, Maria Tourou allows the colours to arrange themselves on the canvas. She never knows what the result will be.



# Technology gives paralysed patients a chance to move

By Philippa Neave

NEW YORK — Eddie Keating was a star cadet in the U.S. Marines three years ago when he was accidentally shot in the head by a friend during an exercise. The bullet blew part of his brain away. He fell into a coma and when he came out of it 21 days later, his whole body was paralysed except for his left hand. "The only other thing I could move was my eyes," recalls 25-year-old Keating. Months of intensive physical therapy helped him to regain movement in the upper part of his body, but it looked as though he would be in a wheelchair for the rest of his life.

But Keating was one of a very lucky few selected for an experimental programme that holds out tremendous hope for people who have become paralysed as a result of accidents or illness. Doctors are using tiny electrodes called neural prostheses implanted in the body to stimulate muscles that can no longer be activated because the nervous system has been damaged. Known as Functional Electrical Stimulation (FES), the system is designed to provide the impulses that normally come from the brain. One and a half years after his accident, Keating, who has been implanted with 32 electrodes, took his first steps.

The system has already been successfully applied to help patients overcome paralysis from strokes or accidents, deafness, incontinence, epilepsy and the crippling effects of diseases such as cystic fibrosis and multiple sclerosis. Doctors are also working on a programme to restore at least partial vision to the blind.

Explains Dr. William Agnew of the Huntington Medical Research Institution in Pasadena, California: "The nervous system is based on the electrical transmission of impulses, and in cases

when this transmission is interrupted, for example in spinal cord injuries where the spinal cord is partially or completely destroyed, there is no longer any communication between the central nervous system — the brain — the spinal cord and from there to the muscles."

Dr. Agnew, who is one of the pioneers of this technology, has been working to refine it for the past 20 years. "Nerves and nerve cells below the point of interruption are still viable, the problem is they have no instruction," he notes. "FES is a mechanism by which we replace the brain's input by artificial input. We are supplying electrical energy via electrodes that are implanted in or around the nerves." Once the tiny needle-shaped electrodes are implanted in the body, they are connected through a series of hair-like wires to a small computerised receiver that hangs on a person's belt. The receiver is connected to a small power source which can be activated at will by means of a ring equipped with a tiny joystick worn on the index finger.

The wires come out in the groin, explains Dr. E. Byron Marsolais, chief of rehabilitation medicine at the Department of Veterans Affairs centre in Cleveland, Ohio, who is treating Keating and who participated in the development of the technique. "They (wires) are channelled under the skin and come up in a central area. Eventually, you won't have wires, they will end in the belly and the receiver will be implanted under the skin in the gut. Ultimately we will have telemetry and no wires." Current research holds the promise that patients will soon be able to activate their devices by remote control. "The next step," adds Dr. Marsolais, who is one of the world's leading experts on lowerbody applications of the technology, "is to bring in self-

control by the (implanted) computerised receiver so it can make the decisions and control the next movement. There are some problems still with interfacing, but it is certainly very feasible." Dr. Marsolais is a spinal surgeon with a Ph.D. in engineering mechanics.

A small-scale system with only eight electrodes or "channels" is enough to help somebody paralysed get out of bed and transfer to a wheelchair on his own, as well as move in bed so as to avoid getting sores. According to Dr. Marsolais, "a system with 50 channels allows walking — we've gone 3,900 feet without stopping — and going up and down stairs. Most walking still requires a balance aid. We're probably three years away from producing a 50-channel device without wires."

If this sounds like science-fiction, it is very real to patients like Keating. Although he has only been able to walk and practice using his system under medical supervision, he looks at it as another chance to live. "I'm happy to death I can walk around," he exclaims. "The other day, for the first time ever, I used two canes and walked a little over a mile to the doughnut store. Were it not for this system, I thought I would spend the rest of my life in a wheelchair." Keating is now able to drive a car and take his girlfriend out.

While scientists caution that FES is still far from being widely commercially available, experiments conducted so far with a few dozen patients in the U.S. and on laboratory animals are very promising. Dr. F. Terry Hambrecht is responsible for overseeing the \$60 million neural prosthesis programme at the U.S. National Institutes of Health which involves some 60 scientists. "We do not want to raise false hopes, it is all still very experimental," he says.

"Things will be very different in the next 10 years."

So far the most widely applied systems are respiratory devices and ear implants for the deaf. Doctors have found ways to stimulate the diaphragm with electrodes, meaning that people whose lungs don't work and who would otherwise be immobilised in an iron lung can now lead close to normal lives. "They can control their rate of breathing from outside transmitters which are like little high frequency electric generators," explains Dr. Hambrecht, who has a degree in electrical engineering as well as a medical degree. The patient now adjusts the rate and depth of breathing with a sort of remote control device, but Dr. Hambrecht predicts that in the future, scientists will be able to produce a device that adjusts automatically to provide deeper breathing when the person exerts a demanding physical effort.

Another area in which neural prostheses have been used successfully is in cochlear implants. Profoundly deaf subjects can obtain a crude awareness of sound through an implanted device that converts acoustic information into electric signals that stimulate the ear's cochlear nerve. Some 5,000 people around the world now have such devices which can alert them to noises such as fire alarms. The implant bypasses a malfunctioning inner ear and directly stimulates the auditory nerve. Most of those who have received the devices are people who were not born deaf and who can recognise sounds. The latest models of the device can help people recognise speech at near-normal levels.

While advances have been remarkable, some daunting challenges remain: One is how to protect the sensitive electrodes in the high-salt, corrosive environment of the body. Dr. Agnew has been

working with other scientists for many years to develop a coating for the electrodes that is both bio-compatible with the body so that it won't be rejected, and resistant. "Insulation is critical," says Dr. Agnew. "One of the chief problems is how you go about interfacing metal electrodes to tissue. Also what electrical stimulation to use. The electrodes have a very small surface and the charge can cause the dissolution of the electrode itself."

Dr. Agnew is also responsible for defining the electrical parameters: Which type of current, frequency, power and pulse duration. "This is what we mean by safety, and efficiency," he says. "Electrical energy itself is not a problem, we now know very precisely what we can do and how to get to various parts of the nervous system. The problem is getting the hardware to really be a life-time equipment." Dr. Agnew and his team are currently testing electrodes made of iridium, and other researchers are trying to scale them down to the point where they can be injected through a long needle and set in place without surgery.

According to experts, the technology may also benefit epileptics who are not responsive to available drugs. Some 100 such patients have been implanted with electrodes send a flood of impulses to the brain during an epileptic seizure," Dr. Agnew explains. "Many patients feel an impending seizure and can activate their devices. If they get not warning, they can programme their stimulator to operate two minutes out of every hour, for example. Some people are now able to drive for the first time, and that is very encouraging." The device has received pre-market approval from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and surgeons from several European countries are being trained to do the implants.

Similarly, the technology is helping those who lose bladder control, one of the most common age-related problems. Implanted electrodes



Eddie Keating, formerly of the U.S. Marines, was paralysed by a firearm accident. Thanks to a high-tech device, he is learning again how to move, he is learning again how to walk.

stimulate the bladder muscles to stay tight until the patient activates a small remote control device that turns off the electrode, allowing the muscles to relax and the bladder to empty.

The technology is also promising for the victims of strokes. Hunter Peckham, a professor of bio-medical engineering at Case Western University in Cleveland is working with patients who can move their shoulder but not their hands. "The objective," he says, "is to provide the ability to control grasp-and-release motions and help patients gain rudimentary sensory information about how hard they are grasping." Using a sensor worn on their shoulder, patients can send signals via a processor to activate electrodes in the arm and forearm. The system is proportional, acting like an accelerator pedal on a car.

Although the system is not yet sufficiently refined to activate individual fingers, formerly paralysed patients can do things like use a telephone, feed themselves and brush their teeth. Adds Dr. Peckham: "The hand is a

very complex mechanism and we have to grade the activation of each muscle independently. The grasp action involves eight muscles and we have to use one electrode for each muscle and synchronise them." Three people have so far been implanted with the more advanced systems, while 40 others are using the more basic grasp-and-release devices.

A device of this sort now costs about \$20,000 for the hardware alone. This does not include the intensive therapy needed to teach the patients how to use it. But Prof. Peckham and others predict that the cost will come down when the devices become more widespread. An eight-channel device costs between \$12,000 and \$15,000 while a 50-channel system of the type being developed by Dr. Marsolais to get patients walking can cost up to \$50,000. "That is the price some people pay for an automobile," he notes, arguing that it is a small amount compared to the cost of caring for a paralysed patient.

"The devices could be recyclable," he says. "They are

designed to last indefinitely... What is important is to teach the paralysed to keep in shape, avoid getting fat and prevent bed sores. They have to do their exercises and keep their joints moving otherwise they won't be able to use the system."

One of the world's first beneficiaries of the system, Keating admits: "It is hard work and very repetitious, the more you do it the better it gets. I've come a long way and I'm still considered a baby, but I strive to do better. Every step is a challenge but it gives me great confidence just to be able to get up and face people at eye level."

The first time I stood up I was ecstatic." He plans to leave home and move into his own house, and he is taking university courses to study psychology. His goal is to become a counsellor for the handicapped. "I want to work with people who are so depressed if they want to commit suicide. I can say to them, look at me. I can do anything anyone else does. don't give up, there is always hope," — World News Link.

## WEEKEND CROSSWORD

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By Bessie Gordon

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Jordan Press Foundation,  
University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.

Telephones: 667171/6, 670141-4

Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO

Facsimile: 661242

The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays.

Subscription and advertising rates are available from the Jordan Times advertising department.

## NAM's new identity!

FOREIGN MINISTERS from the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) held their recent meeting in Cyprus in search of a new identity for their movement but emerged without an agreement. The soul searching for a new role for the movement came in the wake of the collapse of the communist order and the emergence of a new international order dominated by the U.S. As NAM came into being in 1961 to address the causes, interests and perspectives of the underdeveloped countries in the context of the East-West rivalry, it became inevitable that the poor countries of the world would look for a new role in the new order. Not that the foreign ministers of the movement could themselves make final and binding conclusions on the new characteristics and objectives of their organization. They were mandated to merely submit recommendations to the NAM summit scheduled to convene in Indonesia next September. Yet, the participation of only twenty or so foreign ministers had put a damper on the expectations that the movement is still alive and kicking. This came in stark contrast with the fact that the movement is composed of 101 nations, only fifty three of which saw it fit to attend the Cyprus ministerial meeting.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa proposed to his counterparts in the movement that NAM be amalgamated with the so-called Group of 77 comprising the developing countries within the United Nations. The Foreign Minister of Indonesia, Ali Al Attas echoed similar views when he called on the conference to promote closer association between the Group of 77 and the movement since, essentially, their new role is to address the North-South dialogue on economic issues in a bid to bridge the widening gap between the haves and the have-nots.

There is considerable sense in such an approach to the quest for a new identity and orientation for NAM, for there is little doubt that the traditional role of the movement in the context of the former international order dominated by two superpowers has gone for as long as one can see. There is little that the poor countries of the world can do now to affect the political shape of the world except to regroup economically in a bid to exercise a higher profile in the future on all fronts, including political and security concerns. The main thing is to build a more effective cohesion between these countries — something which does not seem to be on the cards now. Perhaps the proposal to unite the Group of 77 with the movement offers the best hope for the future of both groups. After all, the Group of 77 is composed of more than one hundred underdeveloped countries whose attention is centred on protecting the economic rights of the underdeveloped countries of the world. Otherwise, as many nations have warned, there will continue to be burdensome overlapping in roles, identity and efforts between them. Of course, it is now up to NAM's summit, later on this year, to decide on such far reaching issues. Let's hope that, this time around, more leaders from the poor countries of the world will see fit to attend that summit.

## Does it only snow over Israel?

The U.S. mainstream media, alternative media and Israel

By Mustafa Tell

The bias of the U.S. mainstream media towards Israel and against the Arabs is well established and should be dealt with as a fact. But when this bias goes beyond political reporting into weather conditions reporting, one must wonder if this bias is the result of racism and outright hatred towards the Arabs, I am referring to an article published on the front page of the New York Times on January 3, 1992. The article, "Jerusalem Dressed in White" by Clyde Haberman, was about the snow storm that hit the Middle East the first week of the year. Out of about 142 lines in the article, 10 lines dealt with the storm in Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey. Syria, a country with a population three times bigger than the population of Israel, was not even mentioned in the article at all. Israel, on the other hand, got the lion's share of the article with about 132 lines!

"Jerusalem Dressed in White" is only one of many examples of the bias towards Israel in the U.S. mainstream media. This article, though, is not just a weather report article. It should be viewed in its larger connotation. Three major themes are related to this "innocent" weather article. The first, and the most dangerous, is the fact that the occupied city of Jerusalem is referred to in the article as the capital of Israel. The second and third themes have to do with recent events. The first event is the U.S. sponsored peace process and the second is Israel's

request for a U.S. loan. Israel image as a peace-loving nation has been fluctuating due to Israel's arrogance and hardline stance in the ongoing peace process. Added to that are the negative feelings of many people here in the U.S. towards Israel's loan request. These people do not understand why the U.S. should give Israel any aid, especially when the U.S. is suffering one of its worst recessions. To counter all that, the mainstream media here started a beautification campaign to improve the image of Israel. "Jerusalem Dressed in White" is part of this campaign.

Another campaign, a campaign of guilt, is also being waged by the mainstream media. Hardly a day passes by without a Holocaust related story in this media. Films and books that have something to do with the Holocaust are suddenly everywhere. It will be naive to consider all that as just a coincidence, especially after realising that most of the outlets in the mainstream media are owned by just a few companies. For example, the company that owns the New York Times also owns 24 other daily newspapers and eight weekly or twice weekly newspapers. It does not stop there. The Times company also owns 17 magazines, five television stations, two radio stations, a news service, a feature syndicate, and various other media-related businesses. The Times company is also involved in many businesses outside of the U.S. and businesses that are not connected directly to

the media. This makes the New York Times not only a news outlet, but a news maker and manipulator.

Unfortunately, this powerful news maker and manipulator is biased towards Israel. This bias, however, is not restricted to the New York Times. In fact, most of the mainstream media outlets here are biased towards Israel. To get an objective view of Israel, the people of the U.S. have to turn to the alternative media. The alternative media presents to the people of the U.S. a different Israel: an Israel with no make-up. The image of Israel in the 1940s alternative media did go through a transition. In the 50s and 60s many people in the alternative media, and the mainstream media, saw Israel as the only bright spot in the Middle East. Israel was considered democratic, modern, liberal and a peace-loving. This positive image did not last long. The true Israel, the Israel that was hiding behind a propaganda image, finally surfaced. The mainstream media, though, maintained its positive portrayal of Israel. On the other hand, the alternative media started to portray Israel objectively.

Now, after we have looked at an example from the mainstream media, we turn to some recent examples from the alternative media. In the December, 25, 1991, issue of the Guardian, an independent, albeit leftist, weekly newspaper, there were two articles related to Israel. The first, "Israel's iron first augments slow

hand at peace talks," by Neil Corbin, portrayed the true harsh realities of the Israeli occupation. These realities such as the Israeli settler violence against the Palestinians and their property, the curfews, the arrests, the killings, the closing down of the educational institutions, the deportations and the harsh rules of the occupation are never seen by the mainstream media. The other article in the Guardian, "Zionism vote overshadows talks impasse," questioned the methods that were used to repeal the 1975 "Zionism is racism" resolution in the U.N. on December, 16, 1991. According to the article's writer, Phyllis Bennis, this repeal could not have happened if it had not been for the U.S. threats, bribes and cajolery. Phyllis Bennis put forward an interesting argument when she wondered why it took the U.N. a month-long debate to come out with the 1975 resolution but only a short debate, in which only the U.S. and Lebanon representatives spoke, to come out with the repeal resolution? This question never saw the daylight in the mainstream media. While the Guardian, and the majority of the alternative media outlets, attacked the repeal resolution, the mainstream media hailed it as an important victory for humanity.

The writer is a graduate of the Tampa University, in South Florida, where he obtained a BA degree in economy and administration. He is preparing for a Masters degree in the U.S.

## Romania's shaky democracy faces election year test

By Peter Humphrey  
Reuters

BUCHAREST — Romania's shaky democracy, often buffeted by political violence, faces another test when the country holds triple elections this year.

The United States and other countries are watching Romania closely to see whether they should drop reservations about the country, where ex-communists remain politically influential. The first hurdle is on February 9, when Romanians are due to elect mayors and district councils in their first democratic local polls in more than half a century. Local polling will be followed two or three months later by national parliamentary and presidential elections.

Situated in Europe's volatile Balkan region, Romania, with 23 million people, has gone to the polls twice since the bloody revolution in which President Nicolae Ceausescu was executed in December 1989.

Parliamentary and presidential elections were won by a landslide in May 1990 by the National Salvation Front (NSF) which took power in the revolution. The NSF was led by Ion Iliescu, a former senior communist associated with Ceausescu, and a young polytechnic engineering professor, Petre Roman.

Mr. Roman became premier and began dismantling the communist command economy to create a market system, but has since

lost his job.

Mr. Iliescu became head of state and has often appeared as a brake on progress towards free democracy and the free market.

In a December referendum, Romanians overwhelmingly endorsed a new constitution formally establishing a multi-party presidential republic.

Both of the balloting exercises, in which there were cases of double-voting, intimidation — and violence in 1990 — provoked cries of foul play from the opposition.

The International Republican Institute, a Washington-based democracy watchdog body, surveyed the political scene this month and predicted the local polls would also be flawed.

Cited ambiguities in the electoral law, restricted access to the media and funds for campaigning, the power of unelected incumbent mayors, impediments to free voting by students and soldiers, and poor ballot box security.

The institute said such issues raised "serious questions about whether the February 9 elections will be free and fair."

Romania needs a good international verdict on the polls if it is to be admitted to such organisations as the Council of Europe and the European Community or to secure foreign credits and American trading privileges.

"The local elections will be the foundation of general elections. People realise this, and political

leaders are doing as much as they can for their parties," Romanian commentator Octavian Andronic wrote in the daily Libertatea.

Caretaker Prime Minister Theodor Stolojan says national elections must quickly follow local polls in order to end a power struggle and install a government that can focus on solving an economic crisis that includes rising unemployment and triple-digit inflation.

Four main blocs dominate the political scene ahead of the three polls: "Mr. Roman's NSF, the Democratic Convention (DC) of major centrist parties the Democratic Left (DL) Union of Socialist Parties and the Nationalist Ultra-Right.

There are no recent public opinion polls to indicate what share of the votes the main blocs or parties will get.

The NSF has been split by a Roman-Iliescu feud since September, when Mr. Roman was forced from office by anti-reform riots which he blamed on leading ex-communist who still hold influential positions, such as Mr. Iliescu.

Mr. Roman's faction can count on extra support from a radical Young Liberal Party which he briefly brought into a limited coalition cabinet shortly before his downfall.

The DC groups the most important historical parties which were banned under communist rule but resurfaced after the fall of Ceausescu. These include the

National Liberal Party (NLP), National Peasant Party (NPP) and Social Democrat Party (SDP).

They are joined in the grouping by the Civic Alliance Party (CAP) which was created after the May 1990 polls on the lines of civic movements which toppled communist regimes in East Germany and Czechoslovakia the previous year.

The DC also includes the Hungarian Democratic Union of Romania (HDUR), representing most of the 2.3 million ethnic Hungarians who make up some 10 per cent of Romania's population.

The DL links five left wing parties which tacitly support Mr. Iliescu and are sympathetic towards other communists.

One of these five, former communist premier Ilie Verdet's Socialist Labour Party (SLP), which claims to be the Communist Party's legal heir, was barred from entering its candidates in the local elections because it failed to register on time.

The main members of the nationalist ultra-right bloc are the anti-semitic and anti-ethnic Hungarian Romania Mare Party (RMP) and Romanian National Unity Party (RNU).

The Nationalists have engaged in fierce polemics with the HDUR, accusing it of plotting to join Romania's Transylvania region to neighbouring Hungary, which once ruled the area.

## Crown Prince: Bush's reelection good for peace

(Continued from page 1)

future. On Wednesday Prince Hassan delivered a lecture at the Royal War College in which he stressed the importance of political, economic and social justice in the new world order.

Prince Hassan said the current decade has introduced basic changes in international relations. In his lecture entitled "Jordan's Future: Perspective of Security and Cooperation Conference on the Middle East and Chances for Peace After the Gulf War," Prince Hassan said the decade of the '90s has introduced basic changes in international relations.

Stability in the Middle East in a framework of political, economic and social justice constitutes one of the basis for a new world order which should support the current peace efforts aiming at reaching a comprehensive and just settlement for the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestinian problem, the Crown Prince said.

The Prince reaffirmed Jordan's

stand on the Middle East problem which calls for exchanging land for peace and solving the conflict justly through balanced implementation of international legitimacy.

On Tuesday Prince Hassan paid an inspection visit to some villages and areas in the central badia region following the snow-storm which swept Jordan.

Prince Hassan was reassured on the conditions of citizens there and was briefed on their needs. The prince issued directives to the concerned authorities to provide the needed services for them.

Prince Hassan also visited the road leading to Queen Alia international airport and inspected the ongoing work to re-open the road for travellers. The Prince lauded efforts exerted by the Armed Forces, the Public Security and Civil Defence departments and all the institutions and departments whose teams helped in opening highways, repairing roads damaged by avalanches, fixing failures in electric and telephone cables and extending assistance to stranded citizens.

## Frost damages crops

(Continued from page 1)

tomato crop was completely destroyed by the Tomato Yellow Leaf Curl Virus (TYLCV), which is carried by the whitefly. The virus, which is transmitted from plant to plant as it is carried by the whitefly, which feeds on the tomato crops, causes mottling and curling of the leaves, resulting in the plant becoming smaller in size and incapable of producing normal fruits, said Dr. Walid Abu-Gharbieh, dean at the Faculty of Agriculture at the University of Jordan.

The disease is minimised with the onset of cold temperatures as most of the fruits it has infected die and the whitefly population decreases, he said. But the continued presence of the whitefly, especially during extended summers, allows the disease to flourish again as the whitefly spreads it to other healthy tomatoes, infecting

them. Dr. Abu-Gharbieh said. Mr. Khasawneh, while saying that the frost and cold temperatures might minimise the spread of TYLCV by the whitefly, did not think elimination of the whitefly was possible. "We don't talk about elimination," he said. "But we expect that the severity of this pest will be reduced considerably this year because of weather conditions."

Dr. Abu-Gharbieh, while agreeing with Mr. Khasawneh's assessment that the frost would help the tomato crops, said he nonetheless expected some damage to the crops.

Mr. Khasawneh acknowledged that the damage to the tomato crops would be sustained as a result of the whitefly. Despite the cold weather conditions, "this doesn't mean there will be a complete wipeout of the whitefly," he said. "That isn't scientifically possible."

## Shin Bet kills Palestinian in custody

(Continued from page 1)

sessions, according to the Israeli human rights group B'tselem. Mr. Gol said police would investigate Mr. Akawi's death.

Mr. Akawi, a cosmetics merchant from a northern Jerusalem neighbourhood, was rounded up in a Jan. 22 sweep of some 70 supporters of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

The raids came after the group claimed responsibility for shooting attacks on Jewish settlers in the occupied Arab lands.

His attorney, Leah Tzmel, said that when Mr. Akawi showed up at the Hebron military court on Monday, "he could hardly relate, the lack of sleep was obvious."

Ms. Tzmel said she did not see beating marks on Mr. Akawi because he was dressed warmly against the cold. She also noted she was not allowed to speak to her client.

"We left him with the judge, and he showed the judge his beating marks," Ms. Tzmel said.

In his ruling, Judge Muki Knobler wrote, according to the Hadashot daily: "There is suspicion in my heart that there is something to what he (Akawi) said. The investigative authorities must defend those in their custody."

today."

Mr. Knobler ordered police to investigate the allegations and asked for a medical checkup for Mr. Akawi, but also extended his detention by eight days, Ms. Tzmel said.

Also Wednesday, Palestinian sources said Israeli troops shot dead a 12-year-old boy and wounded two other Palestinians during a clash in Ein Beit Al Maa refugee camp near Nablus in the occupied West Bank.

## Algeria

(Continued from page 1)

on the international community to refuse to deal with the new military-backed government.

Prime Minister Sid Ahmed Ghozali, in a radio address Tuesday night, said the front's statement amounted to a plea for foreign interference in Algeria's affairs.

Reacting to a warning from Algeria's leader Mohammed Boudiaf that religion must not be hijacked for politics, the FIS said: "An Islamic state is the people's demand (from) men and women, old and young, towns and villages. It is the way towards stability ..."

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## German League resumes with unfamiliar look

BONN (R) — Bayern Munich, champions seven times since 1980, are uncharacteristically way out of the picture as the German first division resumes this weekend after a two-month winter break.

Germany's glamour club, never out of the top four in the past 12 seasons, are 11th — nine points adrift of leaders Borussia Dortmund with 16 games to go — after an injury-plagued start.

Bayern's crisis has let in teams who usually end up fighting for the crumbs of UEFA Cup places after the three times European Cup winners have polished off the feast.

Two points separate Dortmund, VfB Stuttgart, Eintracht Frankfurt and champions Kaiserslautern at the top as they get back into action with away matches.

Dortmund are chasing their first championship since 1963 with attacking football inspired by Swiss striker Stéphane Chapuisat, Danish forward Flemming Povlsen and veteran Michael Rummenigge in midfield.

They have no injury problems for Saturday's local derby at bottom-placed Fortuna Düsseldorf, where Borussia are unbeaten since 1985 and have won their last five matches.

Eintracht — the first German team to play in a European Cup final, losing 7-3 to Real Madrid in Glasgow in 1960 — are chasing their first championship since 1959.

They could be without classy international midfielders Uwe Bein and Andy Moeller. Both are trying to shake off injuries for Friday's visit to lowly Bochum.

Stuttgart, who upset Bayern's title monopoly in 1984, have big injury problems and are likely to play at Rostock without German internationals Matthias Sammer and Guido Buchwald, midfielders Maurizio Gandini and Andreas Buck, goalkeeper Elke Immel and defender Guenther Schaefer.

Kaiserslautern, who surprised everyone by winning the title last season with a squad of unknown players, visit Stuttgart Kickers without defenders Tom Dooley and Reinhard Stumpf.

Bayern, pipped at the post by Kaiserslautern last season, started their downhill slide after losing 2-1 at home in their second match to former east German champions Hansa Rostock who had only just joined the league.

A stream of injuries deprived Bayern of their consistency and, despite strengthening the defence with Dutch international Hard-

man Jan Wouters, the rot set in. Their dismal performance was underlined by an unheard of five defeats in their own Olympic stadium, coach Jupp Heynckes was fired and replaced with former Danish player Soren Lerby, who had no coaching experience.

Things did not improve and Bayern were bundled out of the European Cup by Danish side BK 1903 Copenhagen.

Former international Franz Beckenbauer and Karl-Heinz Rummenigge were drafted in as advisers. Lerby's job is said to be tenuous at best.

For Saturday's visit to Schalke, Bayern will have back two German internationals, goalkeeper Raimond Aumann and midfielder Thomas Strunz, as well as Danish international striker Brian Laudrup and defender Roland Grahammer.

But international midfielder Stefan Effenberg, who injured a thigh in a friendly last week, is doubtful and striker Bruno Labbadia is out after having dental surgery.

## Soviet Olympic team arrives

ALBERTVILLE, France (AP) — What once was the mighty Soviet Olympic team arrives this year at the Winter Games as a splintered entity, with three former Baltic republics and one unified squad competing independently. Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia are entered as independent countries with their own flags and anthems. Five former Soviet republics — Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan — comprise the unified team, as they will be identified during the Winter Olympics. Those republics now form part of the Commonwealth of Independent States, or CIS.

## JORDAN SOCCER ROUNDUP

By Aileen Bannayan

Special to the Jordan Times  
AMMAN — Al Wihdat clashes with Al Ramtha Friday in the final of the 1991 Jordan Cup — unless of course the match is again postponed.

The cup final was originally set for Jan. 3, and the 1991 season should have been over much earlier, but matches have been continually postponed and rescheduled over and over again which has disrupted the competition, the training and the overall fitness of the teams.

Al Wihdat, missing their striker and league's top scorer Jihad Abdul Muneem, are not happy about Friday's match.

"We wrote a complaint saying that we preferred to play our two remaining league matches before playing the cup final so as to get into the atmosphere of competition, but it seems the Jordan Soccer Federation (JSF) did not reconsider our complaint," Al Wihdat's head coach Mohammad Mustafa told the Jordan Times.

"My team is ready and we will do our utmost, but I doubt the players will be able to play as well as they would have wanted," he said, adding, "We have not played a league match for over two months now."

Training has become routine and boring without a match to follow it up with, so we just want the season to be over because it has taken an unusually long time ... and it's not over yet."

"We've had regular training sessions. The weather conditions have added to our recent 15-day rest but we started training again two weeks ago. The team missed practice yesterday and I'm doubtful we can train properly in the current weather conditions let alone play a cup final on Friday, but that's up to the JSF to decide," Mustafa added.

Al Ramtha meanwhile have been quite active and busy in the Asian Cup Winners Cup. This week, they also played Al Jeel in a postponed league match and Al Ahli in the Jordan Cup.

Al Ahli Monday lost the chance to compete for one of 1991's soccer titles when they lost 2-1 to Al Ramtha in the semifinal of the Jordan Cup.

Another chance Al Ahli lost by their defeat was playing Al Wihdat in the Cup Winners Cup when the 1992 season kicks off on March 20. (The winner of the premier league faces the Jordan Cup winner in the Cup Winners Cup, and the proceeds of the match go to charity.)

Al Ahli seemed to have surrendered to Al Ramtha after a goal by Salim Diyab gave Al Ramtha an early lead in the sixth minute.

Al Ramtha kept up their continued attacks as Rafeh Al Daoud scored Al Ramtha's second goal from a header in the 16th minute.

Al Ahli's Abdul Razzaq

Kokash scored his team's only goal in the 21st minute, after which Al Ramtha concentrated on avoiding another Ahli goal to keep their lead although they could have scored more goals had it not been for the alertness of Al Ahli's goalkeeper.

With this win Al Ramtha reached the final of the Jordan Cup and will play Al Wihdat Friday at Al Hussein Youth City stadium unless weather conditions force another postponement.

### Premier League

In one of the premier league's postponed matches Al Ramtha beat Al Jeel 2-1 in a match that has been described as one of Al Ramtha's worst performances yet.

Al Ramtha played bottom of the league Al Jeel (who have been relegated to the second division) to a scoreless first half.

Badran Al Shagran, scored Al Ramtha's first goal in the 57th minute. Al Jeel, however, surprised Al Ramtha with their determination as they continued to attack and succeeded in equalising in the 77th minute.

Hussein Al Shananeh secured his team's win with a goal in the 81st minute.

With this win Al Ramtha are now tied with Al Faisali with 25 points in the overall standings. But a considerable goal difference might determine the runner-up if they both win their remaining matches when Al Wihdat plays Al Ramtha on Feb. 10, and Al Faisali plays Al Wihdat on Feb. 14 to conclude the 1991 soccer season.

	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Al Wihdat	14	1	1	31	5	29
Al Faisali	12	1	4	34	14	25
Al Ramtha	12	1	4	29	13	25
Al Ahli	9	5	4	28	15	23
Al Hussein	7	4	7	26	25	18
Al Arabi	6	5	7	26	23	17
Al Qadisiyah	7	2	9	17	29	16
Al Karmel	6	1	11	17	42	13
Al Jaish	3	3	12	13	23	9
Al Jeel	—	1	17	6	53	1

## Connors advances at San Francisco tournament

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Eighth-seeded Jimmy Connors fought off hard-serving Bryan Shelton to win in three sets Tuesday and advance to the second round of the Volvo San Francisco Tennis Tournament.

Connors, 39, beat Shelton, who was fresh off a tournament victory in Texas, 7-6, 2-6, 6-3.

Connors took the first set in classic fashion. He squandered three set points and a 5-2 lead in the tiebreaker, then fought off a set point at 5-6.

Connors got another set point at 7-6. And just when Shelton had him backed into a corner, Connors raced the length of the baseline to rip a forehand winner for the set.

Shelton, however, recovered his poise and jumped to a 3-0 lead in the second set and parlayed it into a 6-2 rout.

In the seventh game of the third, though, Connors broke through by climbing on a weak second serve. He added a final break in the ninth game by burying unreturnable shots at Shelton's feet.

Connors acknowledged help from a loud crowd.

"The crowd is always a factor," Connors said. "When they are yelling and screaming, I like it the most."

## HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR FRIDAY FEBRUARY 7, 1992

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: No exact aspects won't help surface indications of a lack of communication between most persons but you would be wise to let events come to you rather than seek them out at present.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Avoid a problem between a friend and attachment early and you save the peace while later you are able to cleverly enjoy the things that you like the most.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) A worldly and an association matter can cause some concern if you allow it to exist and make up your mind you'll get along well with a stubborn person.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) A communication from afar or a new-comer can throw off the routine you had planned if you don't remain steadfast while later plan coming projects.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Consider well what you can afford for pleasures on one hand and amusements on the other, then go off and have a good time according to your decision.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Matters at your home and outside duties are at a stalemate so be sure to first do what your family desires before talking other interests.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Don't try to make any changes in the way to perform your activi-

ties but stick to doing those special pursuits that have proven to be reliable.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Some unusual pleasure appeals to you but you had better look to see if your pocketbook can afford this expense, then make property more attractive.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You are at odds with one of your family on some important matter but keep silent, wait for a better time to go into it; tonight have a good time.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You want to send out a private message that could cause a considerable amount of concern to refrain now but in the evening build a campaign for the future.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You are not apt to understand the attitude of a good friend who gives you good advice you need, then later join a group of interesting acquaintances.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) What you want for yourself personally and what is good for you career-wise is very different so don't try to unite the two, schedule time for each.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) New ideas of all kinds beckon to you for more study but you feel you first have to finish some dreary task, which is not necessarily so.

## GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF  
& TAMMAM HIRSH  
©1991 Tribune Media Services, Inc.

### IN LOVE WITH ONE'S VOICE

Neither vulnerable. North deals.  
NORTH  
♠ 5 8  
♥ A 8 2  
♦ K Q J 9 8 3  
♣ A 7

WEST  
♠ A Q 7  
♥ 8 5 3  
♦ A 7 2  
♣ J 10 9 8

EAST  
♠ J 10 9 8 6 2  
♥ 9 8  
♦ 10 5 4  
♣ K Q 4

SOUTH  
♠ K 4  
♥ K Q J 10 7 4  
♦ 8 5  
♣ 8 5 3 2

The bidding:  
North East South West  
1 ♣ 2 ♣ 3 ♣ 3 ♣  
4 ♣ Pass Pass Pass  
Opening lead: Ace of ♠  
The weak jump overall has become one of the most used and abused bids in the modern arsenal. It was designed to show a weak hand with a long suit; what strength the hand contains is supposed to be concentrated in the long suit. However, when armed with such a weapon it is difficult not to deploy it, even if the circumstances are not propitious.

With all the strength outside the long suit, East's hand was ill-suited to a weak jump overall. West might

have chosen to bid four spades over South's three hearts. However, the hand contained some defense and not too much offense because it was flat, so West opted for the conservative course.

East's action in the bidding boomeranged when West selected the ace of spades for the opening lead. East faltered with the deuce, West shifted to the jack of clubs but the damage that had been done was irreparable. Declarer had no difficulty in losing no more than one trick in each side suit.

Let's suppose that East had been able to suppress the urge to intervene and had passed. North-South would still have reached four hearts, but West's natural lead would have been the jack of clubs. Correct technique is for declarer to duck in dummy and for East to overtake and shift to the jack of spades. That sets the defenders three quick tricks in the black suits, and as long as West makes sure of ridding with the ace on the first diamond lead, South is booked for a one-trick set.

There's a moral to this story. It's all very well to come to the battle armed to the teeth with sophisticated weapons. Just make sure you know when to activate them.

## HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR THURSDAY FEBRUARY 6, 1992

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Six positive aspects provide an unusually special day and evening to get together with those you like personally, whether you are connected with them in a business, marital or romantic way.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Find out what problems associates have during the day in an understanding fashion and help them to solve them, then tonight be romantic with mate.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You need to proceed slowly and carefully in performance of whatever activities face you during the day but tonight you can enjoy being out on the town.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You need to look out for disappointments or trouble at pleasurable activities during the daytime but tonight you can make surroundings more perfect.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Your home can be a scene of some friction unless you skillfully sidestep it during the day but tonight go out to entertainments you like.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You are disappointed or feel life is not giving you all you deserve today but cheer up for tonight you can have a most pleasant time at home.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Don't go into any serious financial commitment during the daytime but in the evening you can

attend to whatever uplifting activities appeal to you.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Think about what you can do to trend your activities into cheerful directions now and avoid all discord and tonight you can make inroads in solving money problems.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You feel during the day you want to burst out from under some restriction but don't feel trusted as tonight shows you how to handle all matters.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You find an acquaintance you thought would be helpful today is too busy with own affairs but tonight you can quickly settle own issues.

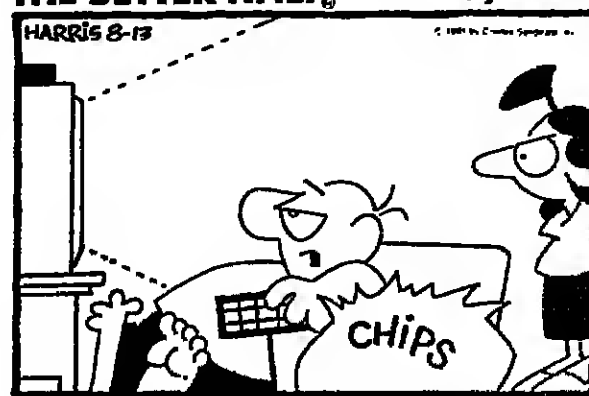
CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Be as wise as the serpent and as harmless as the dove in the outside world to maintain good standing and tonight go after pleasures of a personal nature.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You have some new interests and activities that you want to get off to during the day but progress would be very slow, tonight seek worldly outlets.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You are upset over some account or other practical matter but let it work itself out during day and tonight approach everything from a new angle.

## THE BETTER HALF

By Harris



"It's not reruns — it's recycled television!"

## JUMBLE

THREE SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Bob Lee

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

BUCCI

MYTHE

LADAH

ONABBO



WHAT YOU CAN'T DROP WITHOUT BREAKING IT.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

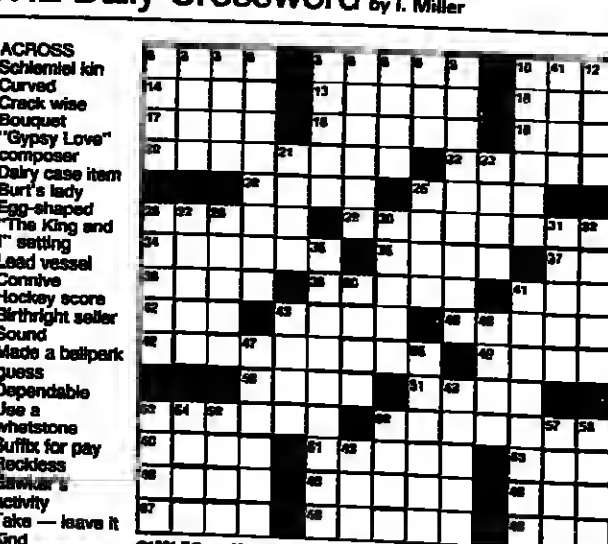
Print answer here: A

Yesterday's Jumbles: YODEL TYING PREFER LARYNX

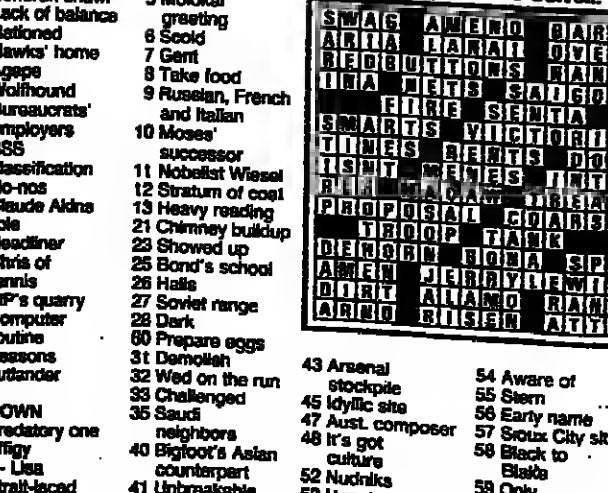
Answer: He used to work as a porter, and now he's gone into foreign trade — AS AN "EX-PORTER"

## THE Daily Crossword

by I. Miller



Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:



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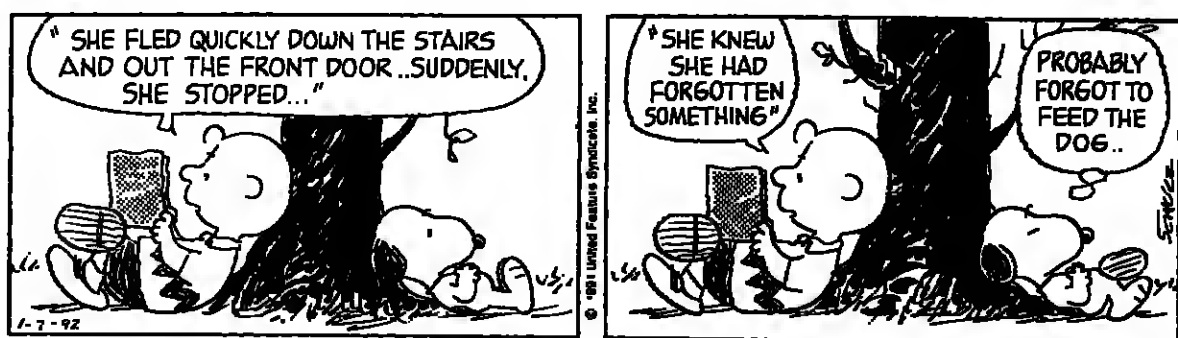
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### PLACEMENT EXAMS:

New students should register for a placement exam. Exams are scheduled for:

January 30, February 6, February 13,  
10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon, 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.,  
4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

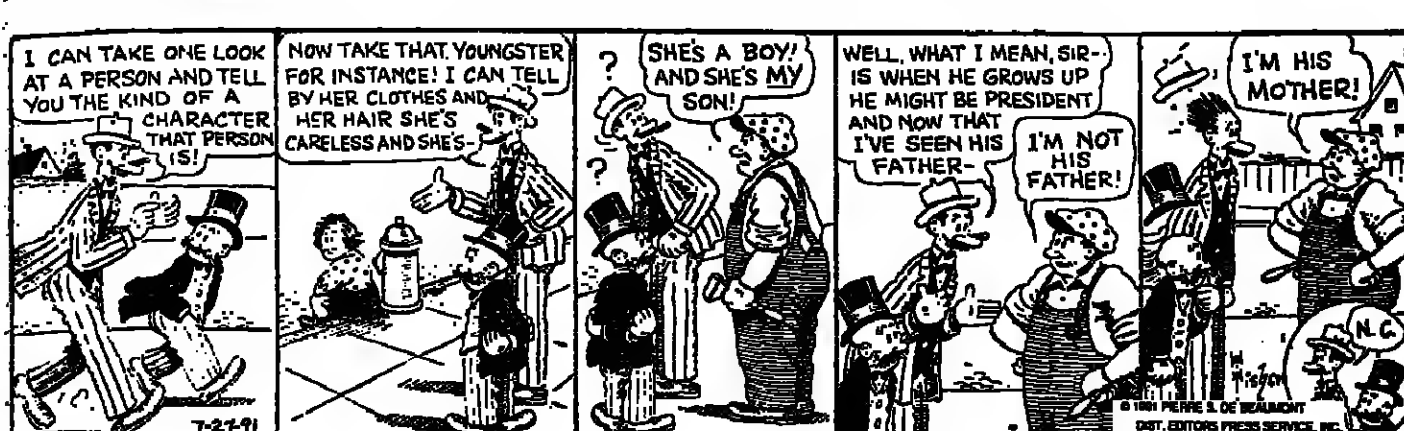
## Peanuts



## Andy Capp



## Mutt'n'Jeff





## Card giant reports \$789m profit

NEW YORK (AP) — American Express Co. has reported improved fourth-quarter and annual profits from a dismal 1990, but the results reflected recession-related problems at its card and travel services division.

American Express in 1991 suffered large credit defaults, a big restructuring charge to pay for problems involving its optimal credit card, defections by restaurants and other customers, and a drop in its credit rating.

The 142-year-old company known for its green, platinum and gold charge cards reported total 1991 profits of \$789 million, or \$1.59 per share, up from \$181 million, or 34 cents per share. American Express' 1990 results reflected a loss of nearly \$1 billion at its Shearson Lehman Brothers' brokerage unit.

Total 1991 revenues rose 5.9 per cent to \$25.8 billion from \$24.3 billion.

## Parker Pen Company put up for sale

CHICAGO (R) — Parker Pen Co., which has been making writing instruments for a century, has said its directors decided to put the company up for sale.

"It was a board decision that the time was right," Peter Bentley, president of North American operations for Parker Pen, told Reuters.

In business since 1892, Parker Pen operates 19 subsidiaries throughout the world and employs about 2,300 people. Its main manufacturing facilities are located in the United States, Britain and France.

The writing instrument group of Parker Pen was acquired by British investors and managers in 1986. Based in Newhaven, England, the privately held finance North American headquarters are in Janesville, Wisconsin.

Parker Pen has annual sales of about \$322 million and expects operating earnings of about \$61 million for the financial year that ends this month, Mr. Bentley said.

Some observers say Parker Pen could fetch more than \$500 million.

Mr. Bentley said he "could see offers come from potentially anywhere." He declined to speculate on timing of a possible deal.

British merchant bank Schroder Wagg has drawn up a 70-page prospectus for buyers in Europe, the United States and the Far East.

## EC commissioner urges new world competition rules

DAVOS, Switzerland (R) — New international rules to control subsidies, cartels and mergers should be drawn up under the GATT world trade body, European Community (EC) commissioner, Sir Leon Brittan, has said.

He told the World Economic Forum, an annual meeting of business leaders and politicians, that the GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) should be extended to cover competition policy and its enforcement.

"What we need is a coherent and clear set of rules agreed internationally with a proper enforcement system, to be accompanied by national laws following the same objectives," he said.

The Geneva-based GATT is

already involved in trying to complete the long-running Uruguay Round talks to liberalise world trade. These have stalled over a row between the EC, the United States and other farm exporters over subsidies.

GATT Director General Arthur Dunkel has set a mid-April deadline for reaching agreement.

But Mr. Brittan, a former British government minister, said his long-term aim was that competition law should take some of the strain instead of relying solely on international trade law.

This was the only way to pass on free trade benefits and give consumers a genuine choice among different suppliers.

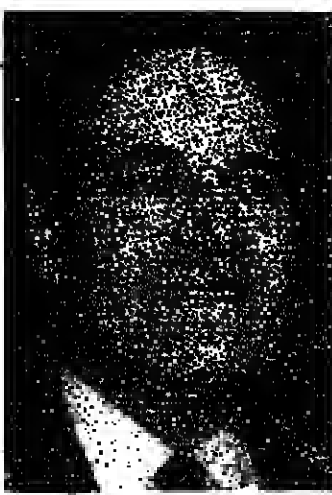
He said the GATT was origi-

nally meant to extend to competition policy but this aspect of its activities had never seen the light of day due to political circumstances in the late 1940s. Now was the time to give it this role.

The GATT already has powers to rule on state subsidies to industry but he wants the enforcement system and dispute settlement procedures to be strengthened.

Mr. Brittan said clear definitions of cartels and restrictive practices needed to be drawn up. Such cartels would be outlawed in the national law of each GATT signatory.

He said the idea of a supranational authority on mergers was utopian. Instead he called for a core of common rules on mergers to be enforced by member coun-



Leon Brittan

tries, with GATT providing a forum for settling disputes.

Recent EC moves against monopolies in member nations had been highly sensitive and this sensitivity would increase if a similar approach was made at the international level, he added.

## Saudi Aramco asks banks for two loans totalling \$2.4b

KUWAIT (R) — Saudi Aramco is borrowing a total of \$2.4 billion from foreign banks in two separate loans which are being arranged by U.S. firm Morgan Guaranty, Gulf-based bankers said Tuesday.

Morgan Guaranty recently invited international banks to participate in a \$1.5 billion general purpose loan for Aramco and a \$900 million credit for Aramco's wholly-owned tanker subsidiary Vela International, the bankers said.

The \$1.5 billion loan — which will help finance Aramco's ambitious expansion plans — is a four-year revolving credit facility carrying a split margin yield of 40-45 basis points over the London Inter Bank Offered Rate (LIBOR).

The 40-year loan for Vela, which will finance the purchase of several ultra-large crude carriers, is priced at 60-70 basis points over

LIBOR, the bankers said.

Tight secrecy has surrounded Aramco's general purpose loan since it was first mooted last year. It is thought to have been postponed because of Kuwait's Jubba \$5.5 billion loan signed with international banks last December.

Saudi officials have denied the kingdom's main source of funds, needed to borrow to finance an expansion programme which will boost oil production capacity to 10 million barrels per day (b/d) from 8.5 million now.

But bankers in the kingdom say the Saudi government, burdened with about \$50 billion worth of Gulf war costs, may have drained off most of Saudi Aramco's surplus funds.

Saudi Arabia said last month it had spent \$126 billion in 1990 and 1991 — almost double the expenditure initially projected —

because of the Gulf crisis.

Bankers said they did not believe either loan was being offered to Saudi banks although some Gulf-based had been invited to participate.

Saudi Aramco's general purpose loan was being treated as a corporate rather than sovereign credit, which meant that it was 100 per cent risk weighted, the bankers said.

This means foreign banks have to set aside capital equal to eight per cent of their contribution to the loan in compliance with rules set by the Basle-based Bank for International Settlements (BIS).

A \$4.5 billion sovereign credit extended by banks to the Saudi government last year carried a zero risk weighting.

Bankers said they believed initial response to the general purpose loan, which is expected to be concluded by the beginning of March, was positive.

## Sudan announces further price rises

KHARTOUM (R) — Sudan, Africa's biggest country, has increased petrol prices after floating its national currency and lifting subsidies on a range of commodities.

Finance and Economic Planning Minister Abdul Rahim Hamdi announced the price rises at a news conference.

He said price of petrol would double from 25 pounds to 50 pounds a litre. Diesel would rise from 15 to 40 pounds a litre.

The price of a loaf of bread, its weight halved, would rise from 50 piastres to 1.25 pounds, he added.

Sudan, bankrupted by civil war and natural disaster, floated the Sudanese pound Sunday in a sweeping package of economic reforms. It ended most import controls, increased pensions and the minimum wage and raised sugar prices.

Mr. Hamdi, quoted on state radio Monday, said the government was spending 8.7 billion pounds on wheat flour and petrol subsidies, and that this could not continue for much longer.

Commercial banks now set the rate of the Sudanese pound to foreign currencies each day based on supply and demand.

The banks bought dollars Tuesday at a rate of 88 pounds each. They sold at 91 pounds to the dollar. One dollar was worth 15 pounds under the official rate abandoned two days ago.

Mr. Hamdi said ready-made clothes, milk, meat, eggs, doors and windows, alcohol and certain drugs still needed import licences.

The switch to a more liberal economic system may open the way for Sudan to restore its credit with the International Monetary Fund. IMF negotiators in January pressed Omar Hassan Ali Bashir's government to decontrol prices, devalue the pound and curb government spending.

## Kuwait tells banks either to merge or raise capital

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait has said its banks must either merge or raise their capital to international required levels after the government clears them of about \$20 billion worth of bad debts.

"Although the solution to the problem of difficult debts will ease burdens... this on its own will not be sufficient to achieve reform in the banking and financial system," central bank governor, Sheikh Salem Abdul Aziz Al Saud Al Sabah, said.

"Merging appears to be necessary... the units that do not favour merging will only have the option of increasing their capital base to required levels in conformity to international requirements," the Kuwaiti News Agency quoted him as saying.

Economists in the emirate said the step would force its eight commercial banks to merge because most of them were under-capitalised prior to Iraq's Aug. 2, 1990 invasion.

Sheikh Salem did not say what capital adequacy requirements Kuwait would set for its banks.

But economists believe Kuwait and its partners in the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council are likely to adopt the eight per cent capital-to-assets ratio required by the Basle-based Bank for International Settlements (BIS).

Since U.S.-led forces ended the Iraqi occupation last February, Kuwait has frequently said it will merge its banks into four bigger institutions to help them operate profitably.

The scheme has been held up because of delays in implementing a controversial government plan to buy their debts by issuing bonds with a maximum 20-year maturity.

The plan, approved by Kuwait's cabinet a month ago, has come under fire from its partially elected National Council as well as independent economists who say it will put too much pressure on the treasury.

Critics also complain many of the estimated 6,000 influential debtors have bidden assets abroad and would be forced to pay up if the banks took them to court.

Some of the \$20 billion worth of debts accumulated during the

Iraqi occupation but at least a quarter of the total dates back to the collapse of Kuwait's unofficial secondary stock market in 1982.

Sheikh Salem said the banks would be allowed to use "all means possible" to verify the accuracy of financial statements showing each debtor's ability to pay.

But he said no measures could be taken to seize any debtor's assets until the 20-year rescheduling period had elapsed.

Repayment schedules are to be decided individually, according to each debtor's ability to repay.

Sheikh Salem did not say when the scheme would be implemented. The National Council's financial committee is reviewing the plan and will submit its report in March.

The government has a controlling stake in two of the eight banks — Burgan and the Bank of Kuwait and the Middle East.

The central bank wants to buy the debts before the banks submit their 1991 financial statements. The deadline is the end of June 1992.

## Cairo wants to revive plans for Hong Kong-style industrial zone in Egypt

CAIRO (R) — Egypt will ask Japan to revive plans for a Hong Kong-style industrial zone north of the Gulf of Suez, a senior government official has said.

The zone, first mooted in 1985, would transform Middle East economies and create jobs for Egypt's unemployed youth, the chairman of the government investment agency, Mohamed El Gharib, told reporters.

"I will tell the Japanese that Egypt is willing to set up a free industrial zone like Hong Kong, north of the Gulf of Suez," he added before leaving for Tokyo.

Mr. Gharib will take part in a five-day conference of top Japanese businessmen and ministers from five Arab states, Iran and Turkey. Some 200 chairman of top Japanese companies are expected to join the talks.

"The Japanese side had shown interest in 1985 in such a zone to replace Hong Kong when there were fears about the (British colony's) future," he said.

"They prepared a study and then the plan was shelved."

Britain has agreed to return Hong Kong to Chinese sovereignty by 1997.

Mr. Gharib said Egypt would provide all facilities needed for the multi-billion-dollar scheme, adding it would take up to 15 years to complete. "This zone would help transform the economy of the Middle East... serve the Egyptian economy and jobs."

Mr. Gharib said he would also ask Japan to pump more money into the Egyptian tourist and fishing industries and would invite Japanese businessmen for a conference in Cairo next September to discuss investment opportunities.

## Premier says India moving towards making rupee convertible

DAVOS, Switzerland (R) — India is moving towards making the rupee convertible as part of its policy of deregulating the economy, Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao has said.

"It's our intention to do away with the inconvenience attached to exchange control," he told the World Economic Forum.

A current scheme, under which an exporter can use up to 40 per cent of export revenues to pay for imports, will be extended, he said.

Mr. Rao told the annual meeting of business and political leaders in this Swiss ski resort that India was keen to attract foreign investment.

The government would no longer determine which sectors would be eligible or block projects which it did not believe were a priority for the country.

But he said the government was particularly keen to attract investment in sectors which would benefit India's entire 840 million population, such as infrastructure.

Industries previously limited to the state sector would be opened to private and foreign investment.

"We do not produce everything that we need in the quantities that we need... we would like to add to the capacity. That's where privatisation and foreign investment come in," Mr. Rao said.

Asked whether telecommunications would be privatised, he said: "I think something on those lines is being planned."

He said "foreign investments would not be nationalised."

"We're not going to do that. We have enough nationalised industries," he said.

The government would also continue to curb spending to cut its budget deficit and fight inflation.

"We are slashing expenditure in a manner which sometimes displeases people... all that the textbooks says needs to be done to bring down inflation... is being done," he said.

India traditionally had close ties with the Soviet Union and hoped to have even better relations with the new states, he said.

He also foresaw the development of business ties with South Africa, now that country is abandoning apartheid.

## French unemployment inches up

PARIS (R) — The number of people without work in France bit a record high in December though the monthly increase was just 1,300, official figures showed.

The jobless total rose by just 0.05 per cent to a seasonally adjusted 2,896,900 in December and the unemployment rate was unchanged at 9.8 per cent of the work force, the labour ministry said in a statement.

The ministry, speaking of a "positive result", noted a more

people left the unemployment register in December and vacancies were almost 10 per cent higher than a year earlier.

Unemployment is a politically charged subject that could become even more important ahead of regional elections scheduled in the spring and a general election next year.

Prime Minister Edith Cresson, plagued by a persistently poor rating in opinion polls and determined to avoid an unemployment rising to three million,

announced a set of job creation measures last month.

The measures will improve training schemes for young people and step up efforts to help the long-term unemployed.

Guy Longueville, an economist at Banque Nationale de Paris, also noted the improving trend, adding that the government's series of make-job measures could now be bearing fruit.

## S. Korean trade deficit grows

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — South Korea ran a trade deficit of \$1.92 billion in the first 20 days of the year on a customs clearance basis, up from \$1.47 billion in the same period last year, officials have said.

The trade-industry ministry officials said Korea's exports during the period increased 12.4 per cent from a year earlier to \$2.37 billion, but imports jumped 19.6 per cent to \$4.29 billion.

The figures indicated further trouble facing the Korean economy this year, with slow exports and surging imports. South Korea, which lacks natural resources, relies heavily on exports for its economic development.

Wages have almost doubled in the past four years, seriously undermining the competitiveness of Korean goods on foreign markets.

## Study says U.S. exports are being underestimated

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States undercounts its exports and they may be more competitive globally than U.S. Commerce Department trade figures show, according to a study.

The study by the National Research Council, part of the National Academy of Sciences, found that the official U.S. trade deficit for 1987 was \$148 billion, but their research estimated the actual shortfall was only \$64 billion.

Robert Baldwin, the study panel chairman, explained that 1987 data was used because it was the latest available when the council began the research in 1989.

A University of Wisconsin economics professor, Dr. Baldwin said the official 1991 deficit was

likely to be about \$65 billion, but would not estimate what he thought the actual shortfall might be.

"We think the official tally of exports is too low," Dr. Baldwin said. During the 1980s exports to Japan, Germany and Britain were underreported by about seven per cent and were \$10-\$20 billion greater than figures showed.

Exports were undercalculated because the federal government was more diligent in calculating imports to insure tariffs were paid. Goods leaving the country received less scrutiny, in part, to avoid obstacles for exporters.

Also exporters shave numbers to defray freight costs and foreign duties, Dr. Baldwin said. Comparing exports with im-

ports was not an accurate enough way to measure trade balances, the figures used for many national and private company economic decisions, Dr. Baldwin said.

Exports are seen creating jobs and imports costing them, he said. However, jobs also can be created by foreigners buying more and producing more in the United States and, similarly, increased U.S. overseas production may mean fewer American jobs.

The study urged Washington to develop a method to measure U.S. global performance that follows transactions by the nationality of a firm's majority owners, not by the nation in which the firm is located.

It also urged government export reporting procedures be tightened.

### LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Wednesday.

One Sterling	1.8040/50	U.S. dollar
One U.S. dollar	1.1805/10	Canadian dollar
	1.5883/93	Deutsche mark
	1.7875/85	Dutch guilder
	1.4168/75	Swiss franc
	32.69/72	Belgian franc
	5.4100/15	French franc
	1194/195	Italian lire
	125.80/90	Japanese yen
	7.225/75	Swedish crown
	6.1540/90	Norwegian crown
	355.10/355.60	Danish crown
One ounce of gold		U.S. dollars

Cinema Tel: 677420

**CONCORD**

Super Star Kevin Costner 1991 Oscar Winner in his outstanding super production

**ROBIN HOOD**

Prince of Thieves Shows: 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.

Cinema Tel: 634144

**PHILADELPHIA**

Patrick Swayze in

**ROADHOUSE**

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 P.M.

Special shows for children on Thursdays and Fridays at 11:30 a.m.

**Ninja Turtles**

Tel: 675571

**Nabil Al Mashini Theatre**

Every day you meet with The stars of Haret Abu Awwad Family in their play:

**Zaman Al Shakiabah (Somersault Time)**

at 8 p.m.

Cinema Tel: 625155

**RAINBOW**

Noor Al Sharif in

**Naji Al Ali**

Arabic

Shows: 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.



## Russian defence adviser says military officers are alarmed

MOSCOW (R) — A top defence adviser to Russian President Boris Yeltsin said Wednesday military officers were at the limits of their patience over living conditions and he feared events in the army could spin out of control.

A survey published in Nezavisimaya Gazeta newspaper underlined his fears. It showed an overwhelming majority of officers wanted the Soviet Union restored and believed Russia could soon become embroiled in armed conflict.

The adviser, General Konstantin Kobets, said in an article in the same newspaper that money must be invested quickly to build houses and improve conditions. All former Soviet republics must share the burden.

"The alarm felt by officers over their future has reached its limits," he said. "If things are allowed to go further, uncontrollable processes could begin, especially in army units deployed in regions of crisis."

Gen. Kobets did not explain what he meant by uncontrollable processes, but the problems of army units have been well documented, especially at a recent Kremlin meeting of officers.

A survey carried out among the officers suggested many believed they should have a say in political decisions.

Almost 80 per cent said final decisions over the future of the forces should ultimately be in the hands of the army itself rather than politicians.

Problems are increasing rapidly in barracks throughout the former Soviet Union.

Desertion has risen steeply, as soldiers leave their units to return

to republics such as Ukraine now setting up their own armies.

Officers live in makeshift homes after returning from Eastern Europe, pay and provisions have dwindled and the prestige the forces once enjoyed has all but disappeared.

In several former Soviet republics they are treated as an occupying force. In Georgia, troops have frequently been involved in gunfights with nationalists.

The survey showed 71 per cent of officers questioned at the Kremlin conference wanted to restore the Soviet Union with its old frontiers.

"None of them could seriously suppose that this problem could be solved by peaceful means," the newspaper said in its commentary.

The survey also showed 57 per cent of officers believed armed conflict was possible in the near future between Russia and other republics of the 11-nation Commonwealth of Independent States which replaced the Soviet Union in December.

Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk, whose claims to take over the Black Sea Fleet have angered both Russia and the Central Military Command, was voted the most disliked leader by the officers, scoring 46 points.

Second came former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev with 45 and third, militant nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy with 33.

The leaders of the Commonwealth are expected to take decisions on the future of the armed forces at a summit in Minsk on Feb. 14.

The Officers' Coordinating Council, set up at the Kremlin conference, appealed Wednesday to Commonwealth leaders at the summit to heed their proposals for change.

Yeltsin starts French visit

Russian President Boris Yeltsin flew to Paris Wednesday for an official visit to France to discuss nuclear weapons in the post-Soviet era and forge new links with a key partner in the West.

ITAR-TASS News Agency said Yeltsin would meet French President Francois Mitterrand, members of government and parliament and business representatives.

Mr. Yeltsin last week visited London, the United Nations and Washington. He is guaranteed a lavish welcome during a 48-hour stay in France, where officials hope to make amends for peremptory treatment given him during a 1991 visit.

During that trip, he was treated gingerly by French politicians eager not to upset then-Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, long Mr. Yeltsin's rival in a protracted battle to determine reform policy.

Meanwhile a senior weapons designer said Tuesday Russia, left without cash to maintain or dismantle the vast Soviet arsenal, could face a future of nuclear explosions and other accidents.

"It is becoming perfectly clear that in the very near future we can expect hundreds of big and small Chernobyls," said Boris Gorbachev, head of a Soviet Nuclear Warhead Design Centre for the last quarter-century.

He was referring to the world's worst nuclear accident more than five years ago at the Soviet Chernobyl power plant, in Ukraine. An explosion at the plant's fourth reactor in May 1986 sent a vast radioactive cloud across Europe.

Thirty-one people were killed in the immediate aftermath, but some environmental groups put the overall death toll from radiation in the thousands.

"The position our nuclear arsenal is in now is quite catastrophic," Mr. Gorbachev told Komsomolskaya Pravda daily.

He said the chances of human error were also dangerously on the rise.

"Whereas before we were able to keep our arsenals at a relatively safe level for the country and the people, today this has become almost impossible."

Mr. Gorbachev blamed cuts in military spending since the end of the cold war as leaders in the former Soviet Union try to convert arms production factories to peaceful, commercial use.

"But nuclear plants are not factories for making military aircraft, which in theory can be turned into vacuum cleaners," he said. "All they can make is weapons."

"So we need to destroy everything that was created over the decades and only then, when there is nothing left, can we start producing children's toys," he added.

But Mr. Gorbachev said, a brain drain of nuclear specialists from the stricken industry meant it would soon become impossible to dismantle warheads in army navy bases.



## Queen Elizabeth to mark 40 years on the throne

LONDON (R) — Queen Elizabeth marks four decades on the British throne Thursday in the manner people might expect of their sovereign — with an ordinary working day in the service of her country.

No fanfares or orchestrated flag-waving are planned for this quiet milestone, as befits a country suffering under severe economic recession and showing niggling doubts about the monarchy. It has had for more than 1,000 years.

Forty years to the day since she became sovereign on the death of her father George VI, Queen Elizabeth, 65, will pay a morale-boosting visit to carers at a home for cancer sufferers near her Sandringham country estate. It will be a poignant visit, as her father died from lung cancer, but an official engagement like so many that have earned the queen respect as a conscientious worker. But her schedule strikes a sad note perhaps for a monarchy some say is starting to show symptoms of strain and old age.

These are troubled times for the House of Windsor, the descendants of dynasty that has become the embodiment of British pomp.

When Princess Elizabeth became queen in 1952 at the age of 25, monarchists predicted a glorious Elizabethan era to rival the golden age of her 16th century ancestor, Elizabeth I.

But where once a royal anniversary might have brought unalloyed praise of the sovereign and exhortations to an even longer reign, this low-key event has seen a flood of critical analysis mixed in with the gushing souvenir pullouts.

The reaction reflects Britain's strangely schizophrenic relationship with the royal family, which stands as a reminder of an age of privilege at a time when politicians are proclaiming a new "classless" society.

The run-up to the anniversary has been marred by media attacks of almost unprecedented virulence on lower-ranking royals and a press campaign to make the queen pay tax on her substantial income.

Over Christmas, a television soap opera series made fun of the royal family by taking footage of the queen at work and adding a spoof sound track that had her renouncing her throne.

Just another bit of fun at the royals' expense, the programme makers said, but British monarchists were angry. Palace aides say the queen has no intention of standing down.

The slide into soap opera is the inevitable outcome of a reign which has seen an expansion of the royal family to include "minor royals recruited by marriage," the Independent newspaper said recently in a reference to the media's royal pet hate, the Duchess of York, wife of Prince Andrew.

They demanded that Mr. Miyazawa's former and current secretaries testify on Mr. Miyazawa's ties to the so-called recruit influence-buying scandal, which surfaced in 1988.

Miyazawa was forced to resign as finance minister because of his conflicting accounts of his involvement in that scandal.

## Rioters blocked boat people fleeing fire, Hong Kong police say

HONG KONG (R) — Ninety-two Vietnamese boat people will be charged with rioting in a Hong Kong camp where 21 inmates died in an arson attack, a police spokesman said Wednesday.

Spokesman Francis Li also said witnesses had told police that a mob had stopped fellow inmates escaping from the blazing hut in which the 21, including five children, died during a riot at the Shek Kong Camp early Tuesday.

"We are going to charge 92 Vietnamese people with rioting tomorrow. They will appear in court on Friday," he said. "That is a holding charge because... the investigation is continuing."

"As to other offences like murder and arson, (that) is something we have to dig into more. We anticipate more charges will be laid."

The 21 North Vietnamese all died at Shek Kong when a rival

## Venezuela leaders seek reconciliation after coup

CARACAS (R) — The Venezuelan government has taken conciliatory steps to heal wounds after a military coup attempt killed 19 people and shook the country's reputation as one of Latin America's most stable democracies.

The government said more than 1,000 soldiers had been detained after loyal army units crushed the military uprising in which President Carlos Andres Perez said he narrowly escaped assassination.

Nineteen soldiers were killed and 51 others wounded in fierce clashes in the capital Caracas and four other cities Tuesday.

But Defence Minister General Fernando Ochoa Antich quickly indicated that the government would not launch a witch hunt nor restructure the armed forces.

"This is not a moment for pointing fingers and rancour. It's an opportunity to mark a course which enables Venezuela to trace a new road to the future," Gen Ochoa told a news conference.

He called on members of the armed forces to work to overcome the effects of the attempted coup and said many of the soldiers detained for taking part in

the uprising had been tricked.

The coup attempt in oil-rich Venezuela started shortly after midnight Monday and sent shock waves through Latin America which has been consolidating democracy and shunning military rule.

Latin American presidents rushed to condemn the coup and voice support for Mr. Perez. Venezuela left military rule behind in 1958 and has since been one of Latin America's most stable democracies, though it is in the throes of an economic slump.

Rebel troops seized the Miraflores government palace and the La Casona Presidential residence for several hours early Tuesday, forcing Mr. Perez to flee.

Snipers fired at pro-government soldiers outside the palace in Caracas and there were exchanges of gunfire in the central city of Valencia.

As forces loyal to the government regained control, the cabinet passed a decree suspending citizens' constitutional rights for a "brief" period in an apparent bid to crush what was left of the insurgency and possible civil unrest.

## 2 more guards convicted of Berlin Wall killing

BERLIN (R) — Two former east German border guards were convicted Wednesday of killing a defector in a hail of gunfire at the Berlin Wall in 1964 and were given suspended sentences.

It was the second trial against ex-border sharpshooters in two weeks to end in manslaughter verdicts. In the earlier trial, a former wall guard was handed a three-and-a-half year jail term and a comrade a suspended sentence for a shooting in 1989.

Both cases dealt with the most traumatic dimension of Germany's 45-year division, slayings of people seeking to flee from east to west after being denied

the right to emigrate.

The Berlin Wall fell in November 1989.

Controversy shadowed the trials because they seemed to target conscripts instead of Communist Party bosses responsible for border policy. Trials against them have been delayed indefinitely by their poor health and legal complications.

The Berlin superior court Wednesday convicted former guards Uwe Walther, 27, and Uwe Hapke, 31, of gunning down 20-year-old Michael Schmidt on Dec. 1, 1964 as he sought to scramble over the wall to West Berlin.

## Japan opposition boycotts debate over scandals

TOKYO (AP) — Parliamentary debate stalled Wednesday after the governing party rejected opposition demands that a former prime minister and 17 other politicians and business leaders testify on recent bribery scandals.

Meanwhile, Fumio Abe, a close associate of Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa charged with accepting 80 million yen (\$640,000) in bribes, was released on bail after 23 days in detention.

The reaction reflects Britain's strangely schizophrenic relationship with the royal family, which stands as a reminder of an age of privilege at a time when politicians are proclaiming a new "classless" society.

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They demanded that Mr. Miyazawa's former and current secretaries testify on Mr. Miyazawa's ties to the so-called recruit influence-buying scandal, which surfaced in 1988.

Miyazawa was forced to resign as finance minister because of his conflicting accounts of his involvement in that scandal.

Mr. Abe was charged with bribery last week for allegedly providing information when he was a cabinet minister about government development projects to Kyowa in return for the money.

News reports say Mr. Suzuki, the former leader of Mr. Miyazawa's faction in the governing party, received money from Kyowa for agreeing to become chairman of a leisure club planned by the company.

Mr. Abe was the second-in-command of Mr. Miyazawa's faction until last December.

Television news showed Mr. Abe, 69, leaving in a black car from the Tokyo Detention Centre, where he had been held since his Jan. 13 arrest. Press cars, motorcycles and helicopters escorted after Mr. Abe's car for several hours.

Legislators are generally protected from arrest while parliament is in session. The current session began on Jan. 24 and is scheduled to last until June 21.

Mr. Abe has acknowledged he received money from Kyowa, but said in a statement Wednesday that he was innocent of the bribery charges.

Opposition parties have called for Mr. Abe's resignation from parliament and demanded that he be summoned to testify in parliament about the scandal.

Meanwhile, a separate scandal involving Tokyo Sagawa Kyubin, a mob-tainted trucking company, surfaced in media reports.

Prosecutors have said they are investigating allegations that Tokyo Sagawa Kyubin distributed millions of dollars to more than 40 companies and 100 politicians.

## Cezanne painting goes missing from Rome gallery

ROME (R) — A watercolour by French impressionist Paul Cezanne has gone missing from Rome's Modern Art Gallery and may have been stolen, the Arts Ministry said. A ministry spokesman said the work, the only one by the 19th century artist in an Italian museum, was not on show but kept unframed in a deposit.

The work has landscapes by Cezanne on both sides — Path Through Rocks and Landscape With Lake. It went missing a week ago but the loss was kept secret for several days. The spokesman said police would search the gallery.

"This is only the latest sign... of how the authorities are completely incapable of safeguarding the national heritage," said art historian Giulio Carlo Argan, a former mayor of Rome.

Rebel troops seized the Miraflores government palace and the La Casona Presidential residence for several hours early Tuesday, forcing Mr. Perez to flee.

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### WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

#### U.K. opposition leader admits affair

LONDON (R) — The leader of Britain's minority Liberal Democrats, Paddy Ashdown, admitted Wednesday he had an extramarital affair five years ago, but said he would continue his political work. Speaking at a news conference, Mr. Ashdown was responding to a welter of rumours about his private life following an attempt by someone to sell a stolen document containing information about his personal life to a Sunday newspaper. Mr. Ashdown, 50, said the document "contains information supplied in confidence to my solicitors about a brief relationship which I had five years ago, before the 1987 general election and well before I became leader of my party (in 1988)." Mr. Ashdown said he would have nothing further to say about the affair and added: "I now intend to get back to work." Although the Liberal Democrats have no chance of winning the general election, expected in April or May, opinion polls have suggested his party, which is ardently pro-European and favours reform of Britain's electoral system, could hold the balance of power in an indecisive result. Mr. Ashdown, a former soldier and diplomat, who has been married for 30 years, has fostered a reputation for political cleanliness and sought to stand above the rough and tumble of election campaigning.

#### Rescued Nepali hiker has first meal

KATMANDU (AP) — An Australian hiker who survived 43 days trapped in a Himalayan valley without food had his first solid food since his rescue, doctors said Wednesday. James Scott, of Brisbane, had "fluids and soft food" after a comfortable night, according to a statement from Patan Hospital. It didn't specify what he had for breakfast. Scott's intravenous saline drips were removed Wednesday morning and he had developed no new complications, said the statement, adding that he "continues to improve." Doctors found no evidence of frostbite but said he had suffered vitamin deficiency. Scott, 23, was rescued Monday from under an overhanging rock in a snow-covered valley by a professional mountain guide, Carl Harrison, who was leading a helicopter-borne search party. Harrison said Scott survived by eating snow.

#### Tyson trial postponed after hotel fire

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Mike Tyson's rape trial was postponed Wednesday morning after a fire struck the hotel where the jury was sequestered. No jurors were hurt, but three other people were killed and 10 injured, authorities said. Prosecutor Jeffrey Modest said the trial might resume in the afternoon. He said jurors had to flee the Indianapolis Athletic Club in their nightclothes. On Tuesday, the judge in the case threw out the least serious charge after the prosecution rested. The defence opened its case, suggesting the boxer's accuser concocted the story so she could sue him later. Judge Patricia J. Clifford dismissed the charge of confinement Tuesday at the request of the defence. The defence in a criminal case can ask a judge to throw out a charge if the prosecution, during its turn, fails to produce enough evidence. Tyson, 25, is still charged with rape and criminal deviate conduct and could get up to 60 years in prison, instead of 63.

#### Pakistanis strike in Kashmir protest

ISLAMABAD (R) — A government-backed general strike shut down much of Pakistan Wednesday in protest at what Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif called India's use of "oppression and suppression" in Kashmir. The Karachi Stock Market and most shops and businesses stayed closed after the government ordered a national holiday to coincide with the strike call by its allies in the right-wing Jamaat-I-Islami religious party. In the Indian-ruled Kashmir Valley, the army was put on alert and extra security forces deployed after Muslim militants called a parallel strike that was widely observed. Mr. Sharif, in a message on the eve of the strike, said the people of Kashmir were fighting a just cause. Radio Pakistan reported. Calling for international pressure on India, he said Delhi's intransigence and gross violations of human rights had forced the people of Kashmir openly to defy the forces of oppression and suppression. Jamaat, closely linked to some Muslim militant groups fighting India's hold over the two-thirds of the mountain region, organised "crush India" rallies in the main cities of Pakistan, which rules the rest of Kashmir. In the capital Islamabad, riot police were deployed throughout the diplomatic enclave to prevent protesters getting near the Indian High Commission.

#### Burmese dissidents criticise Jackson tour

BANGKOK (R) — Burmese dissidents driven into the jungle by their country's generals say pop superstar Michael Jackson should begin his "beat the world" tour by getting his Pepsi-Cola sponsors to stop supporting the junta. "Pepsi-Cola investing in Burma is directly supporting the military regime and indirectly supporting

more and more oppression, arrest, torture and killing of the Burmese people," said Maung Maung Aye, trade minister in the opposition's jungle-based National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma. "If Pepsi-Cola really intend to help world peace and health for the children why are they still investing in Burma?" Jackson, whose multimillion-selling albums include Thriller, Bad and Dangerous, announced in New York Monday he was embarking on an 18-month world tour to raise money for his Heal The World Foundation. The tour is aimed at spreading a "message of global love," with a share of the proceeds going to children's, environmental and other charities.

#### FDA to release implant safety documents

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) said Monday it will release documents raising questions about whether Dow Corning Corp. knew of safety problems with silicone gel implants before marketing the product. In a court pleading filed on its behalf by the Justice Department, the FDA accused Dow Corning of foot-dragging on its promise to release the 74 internal documents. "The public's health and safety interests should not be made to wait until it is convenient for Dow Corning to release these documents," the FDA's pleading said. The agency said it planned to release the 74 documents, many of which have already been the subject of news stories, Friday. While Dow Corning said last week that it would release the documents after Feb. 10, the FDA's pleading said that the company had reneged on an earlier public commitment to release the material by Jan. 27. "In light of Dow Corning's past actions, we cannot be certain that it will adhere to this new commitment," the FDA said in the pleading filed in the case of a woman who won a \$7.5 million judgment for health problems associated with the breast implants.

#### Sihanouk to probe truce violations

PHNOM PENH (R) — Cambodian head of state Prince Norodom Sihanouk will visit the central province of Kompong Thom Thursday to investigate serious ceasefire violations there, a palace official said. Mortar and artillery attacks last month on government controlled villages in the province killed at least 13 people and wounded many others, the International Committee of the Red Cross said. It said more than 10,000 people, mostly poor peasant farmers, were forced to flee the fighting. The government and the extremist Khmer Rouge guerrillas have blamed each other for violating the ceasefire. The Vietnam-backed government and the three guerrilla groups which battled it for almost 13 years signed a United Nations-backed peace accord in Paris last October. The palace official said Prince Sihanouk would travel to the town of Stung in Kompong Thom and ask people there who was responsible. He will be accompanied by Prime Minister Hun Sen and Vice Premier Kong Sam Ol.

#### Pickering to be sent to India

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Bush plans to name Thomas Pickering as U.S. ambassador to India and career diplomat Edward Perkins to succeed Mr. Pickering as top envoy at the United Nations, U.S. officials said Monday. The switch would involve two of America's most senior career diplomats and two of the country's most important and challenging ambassadorships. Before his U.N. stint, Mr. Pickering, 60, had been ambassador to four countries in three countries — Israel, Jordan, Nigeria and El Salvador. He speaks French, Spanish, Swahili, Arabic and Hebrew. Mr. Perkins, 63, former ambassador to South Africa, currently serves as director general of the State Department's foreign service. If confirmed by the Senate to the U.N. post, he would be among a handful of blacks who hold high profile positions in Mr. Bush's administration.

#### 'India got heavy water from Romania'

OSLO (R) — Norway has said that India illegally received a shipment of Norwegian heavy water, which can be used for making atomic bombs, from the government of former Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceausescu nearly six years ago. "The heavy water Norway sold to Romania was sent on to India," senior public prosecutor Anstein Gjengedal said after talks with Romanian officials in Bucharest. The Foreign Ministry said Norway's embassy in New Delhi had asked the Indian government if it had any information on the rerouting of the 12.5 tonnes of heavy water, which was sold to Romania in 1986 for peaceful use in a planned power plant. India has previously denied Norwegian suspicions that it received an earlier consignment of 15 tonnes of Norwegian heavy water — deuterium oxide — which was illegally diverted via Switzerland in 1983. Mr. Gjengedal said he and a Norwegian police officer visited Romania last month to track down the 1986 consignment, sold to a chemicals company with close ties to Mr. Ceausescu, the Romanian Communist dictator toppled in 1989.

#### Gorilla loses toe after fight with mate

CLEVELAND (AP) — Katie, a lowland gorilla whose mate was switched over the objections of animal-rights activists, got into a fight with her new beau and ended up losing part of a toe. Oscar bit Katie, and part of her toe had to be amputated, the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo said. Katie also was treated for a bruised back. Zoo officials said tussling, biting and hair-pulling are normal gorilla behaviour. "We feel there is a struggle for dominance here," said curator Alan Sironen. Katie was separated from her old beau, Timmy, in November after 13 blissful months.